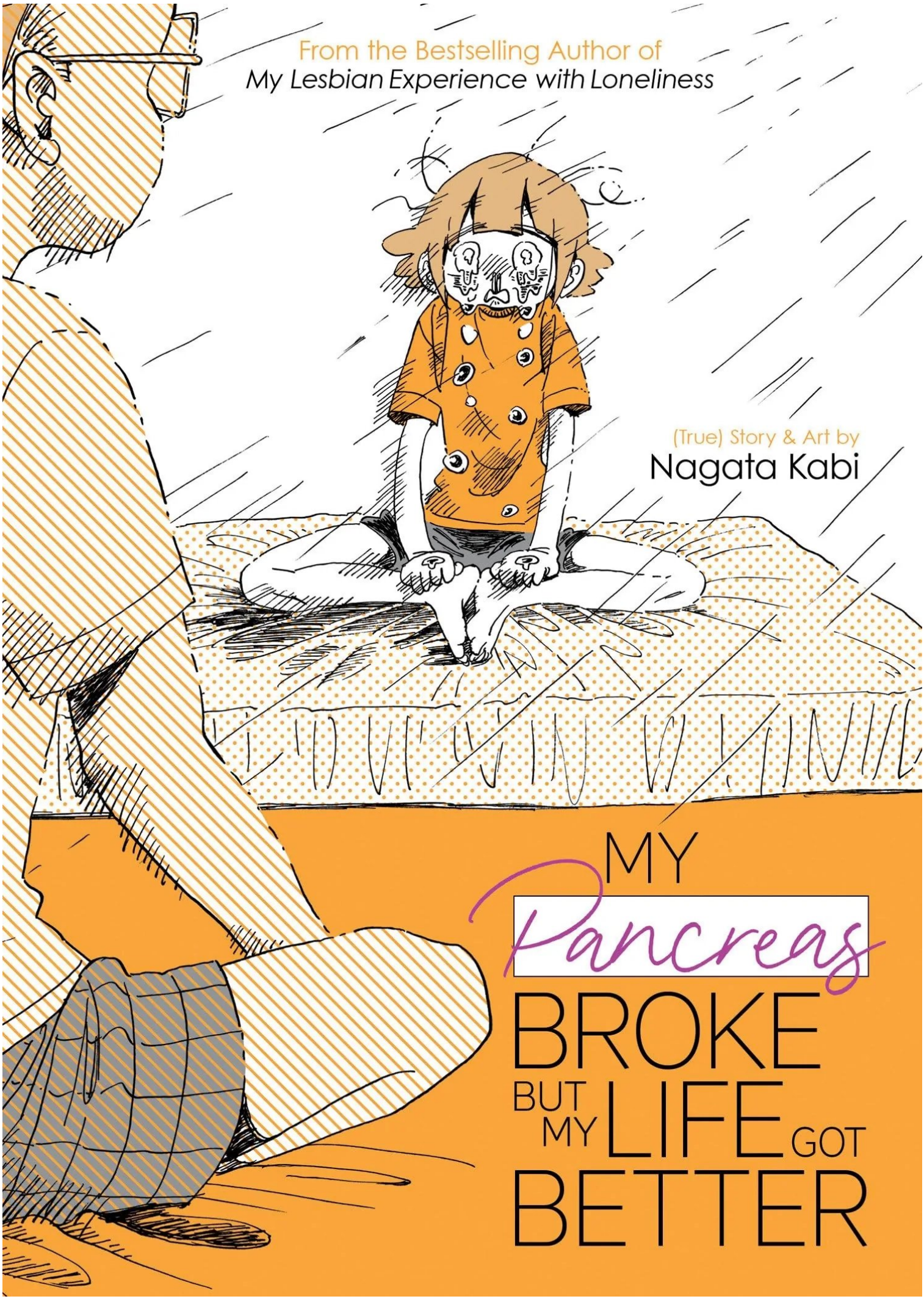
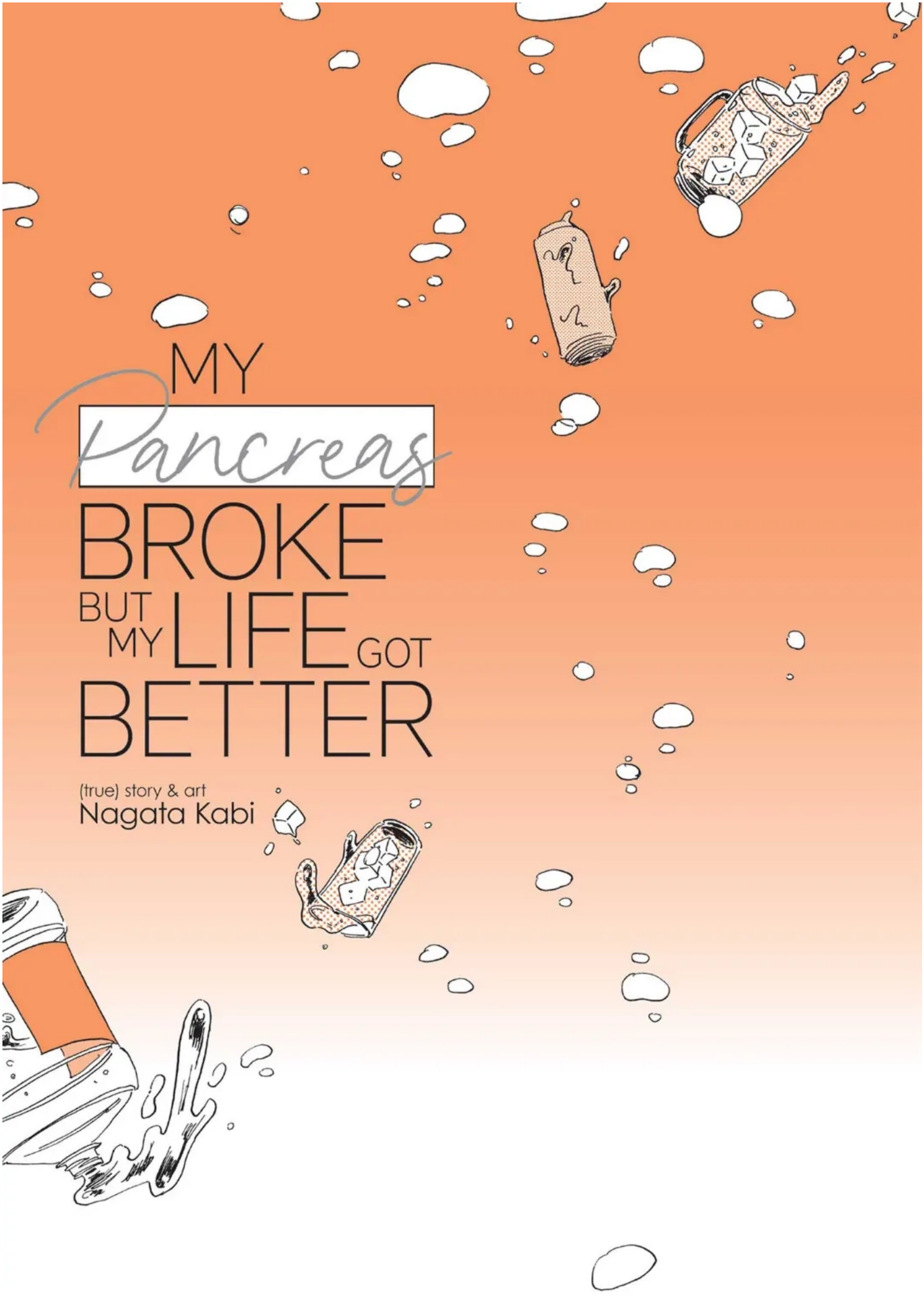
From the Bestselling Author of
*My Lesbian Experience with Loneliness*



(True) Story & Art by
Nagata Kabi

# MY Pancreas BROKE BUT MY LIFE GOT BETTER


MY
Pancreas
BROKE
BUT MY LIFE GOT
BETTER
(true) story & art
Nagata Kabi

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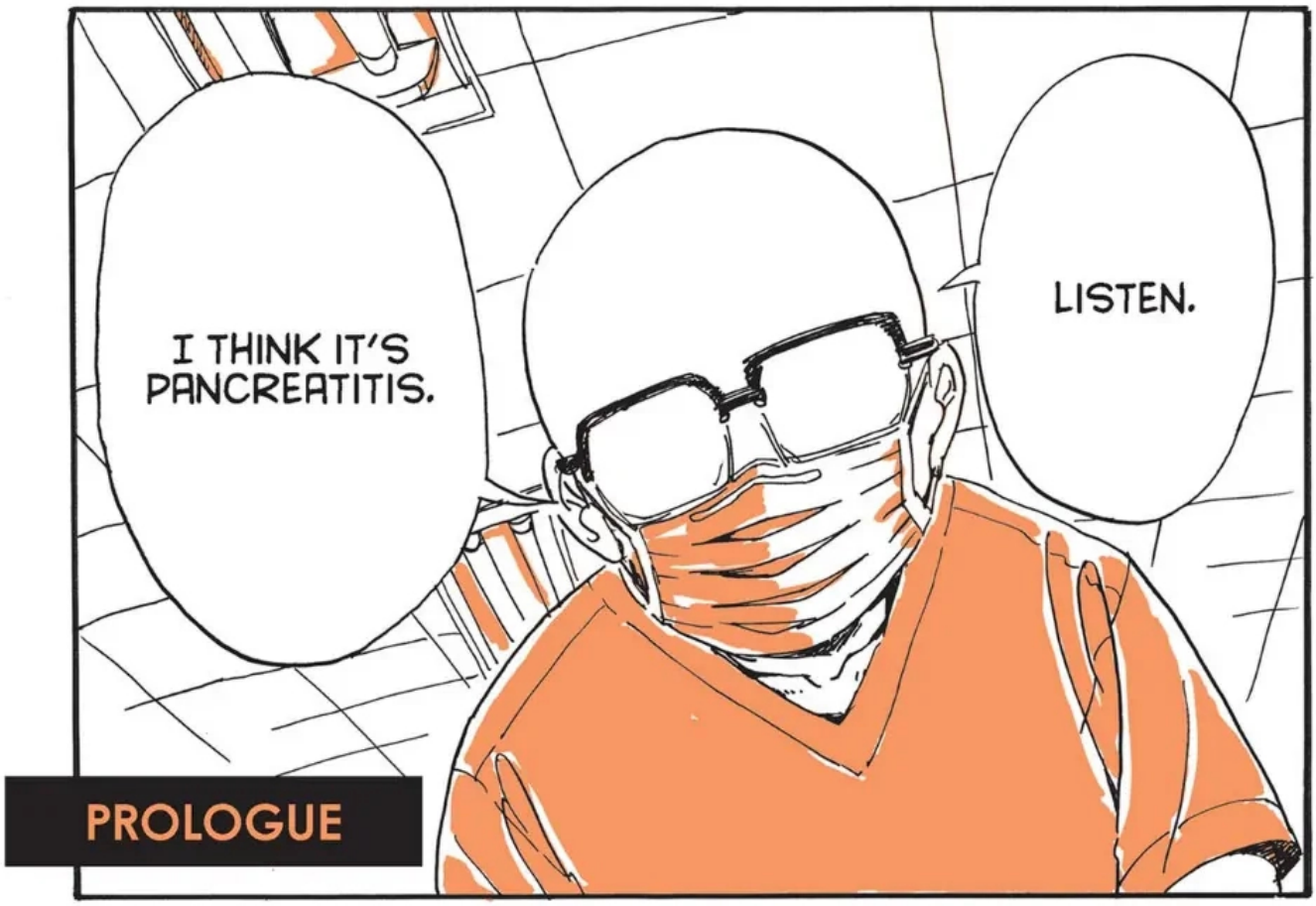
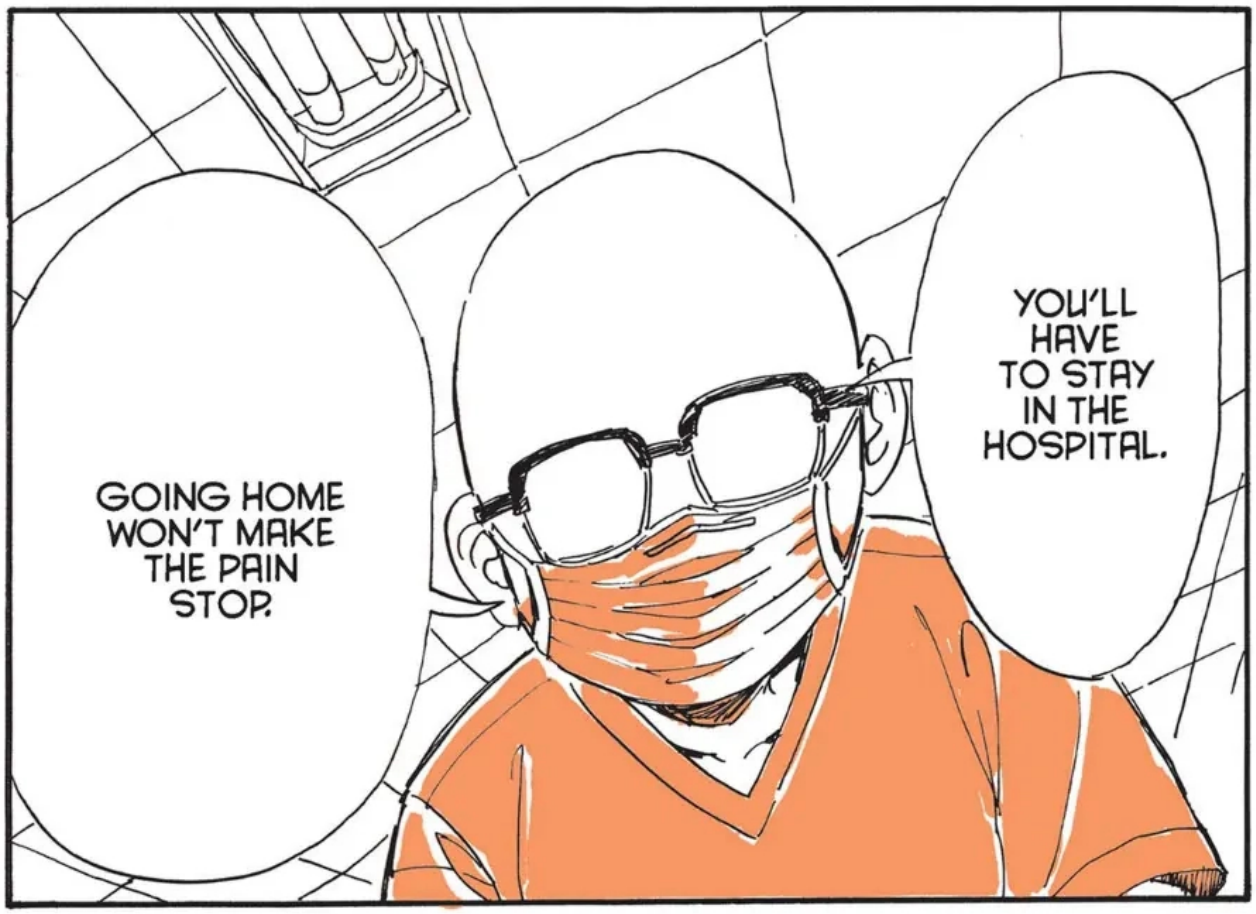
The various medical treatments and results depicted in this book are limited by the author's experience, perception, and decisions. Please do not self-diagnose or self-medicate. If you need help, speak to a medical professional.

My Pancreas Broke
But My Life
Got Better

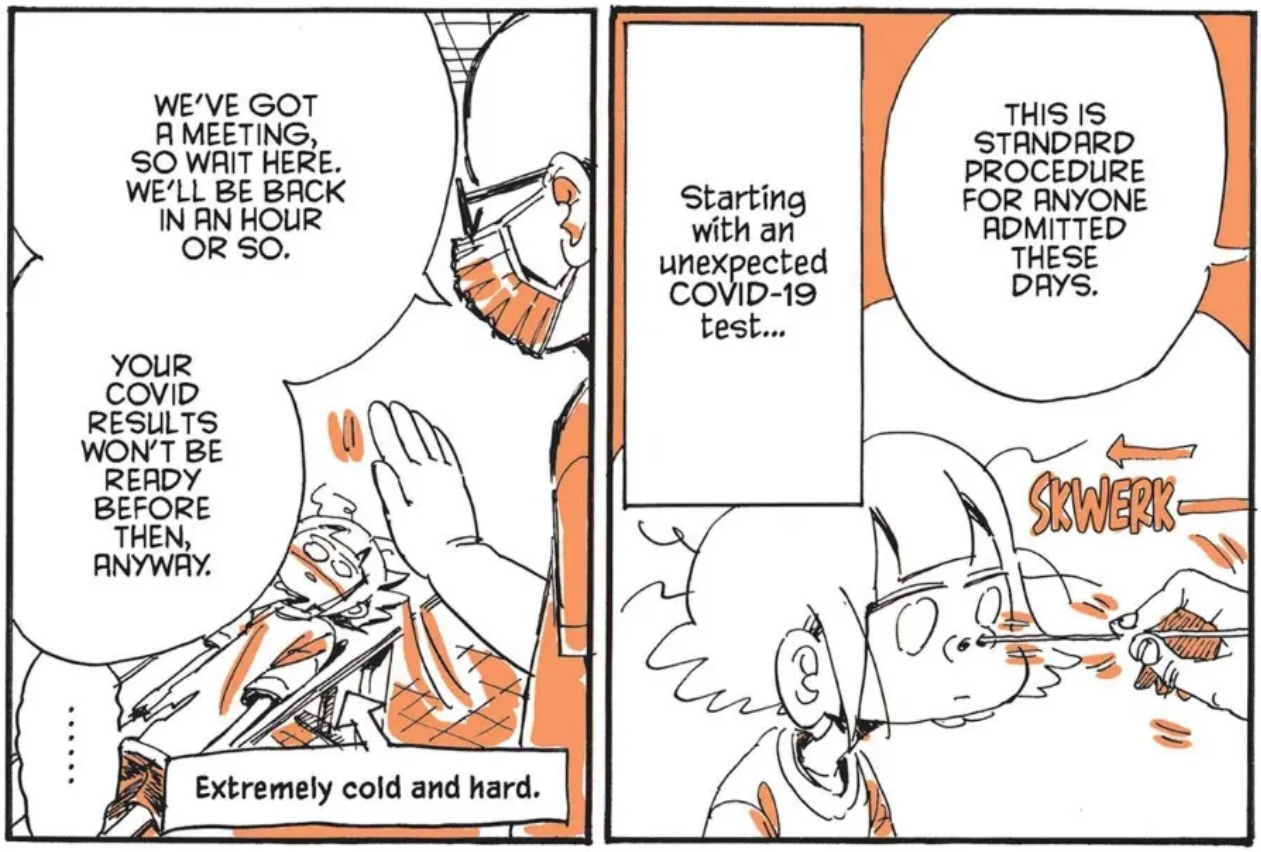

I THINK IT'S PANCREATITIS.
LISTEN.

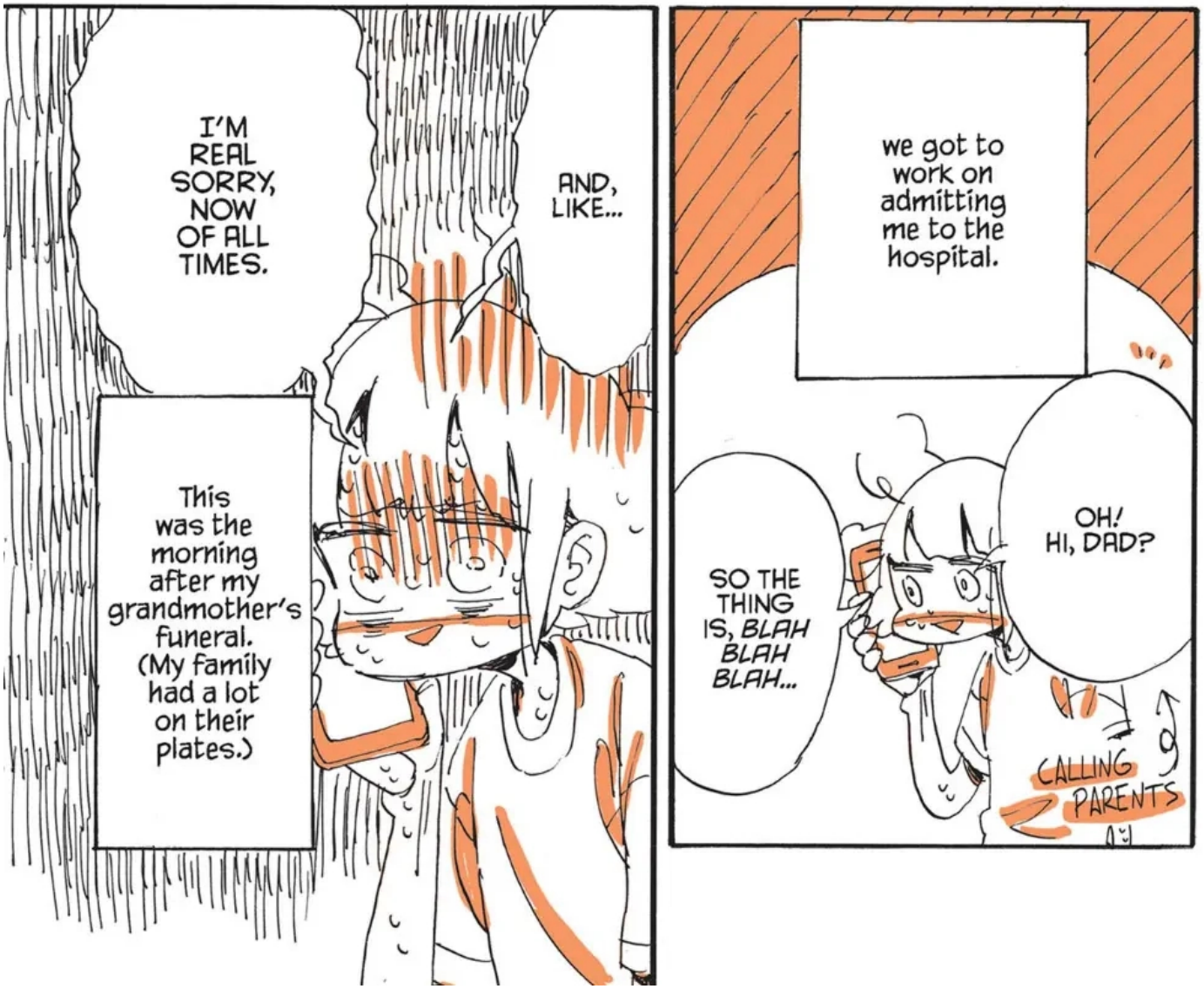
# PROLOGUE

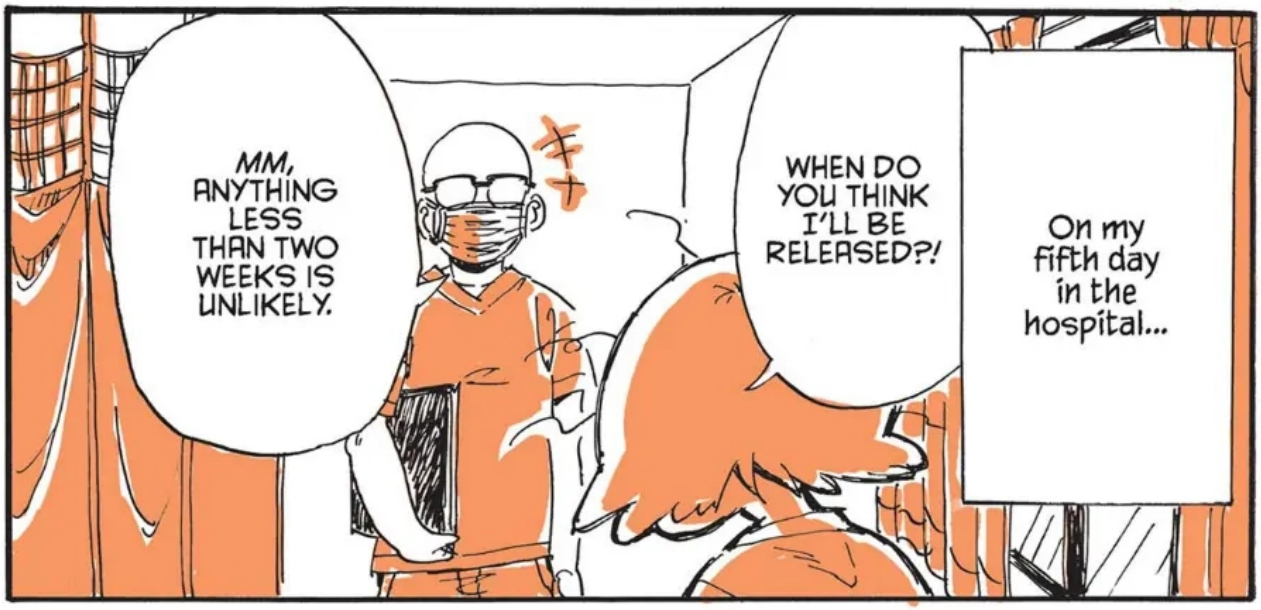
※ I'd had it once before, so I thought that was probably it. But I'd been hoping I was wrong.
……
Nagata Kabi (34)
Manga artist
Drank about a liter of shochu every day.


GOING HOME WON'T MAKE THE PAIN STOP.
YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY IN THE HOSPITAL.

※ This was the second time (omitted).

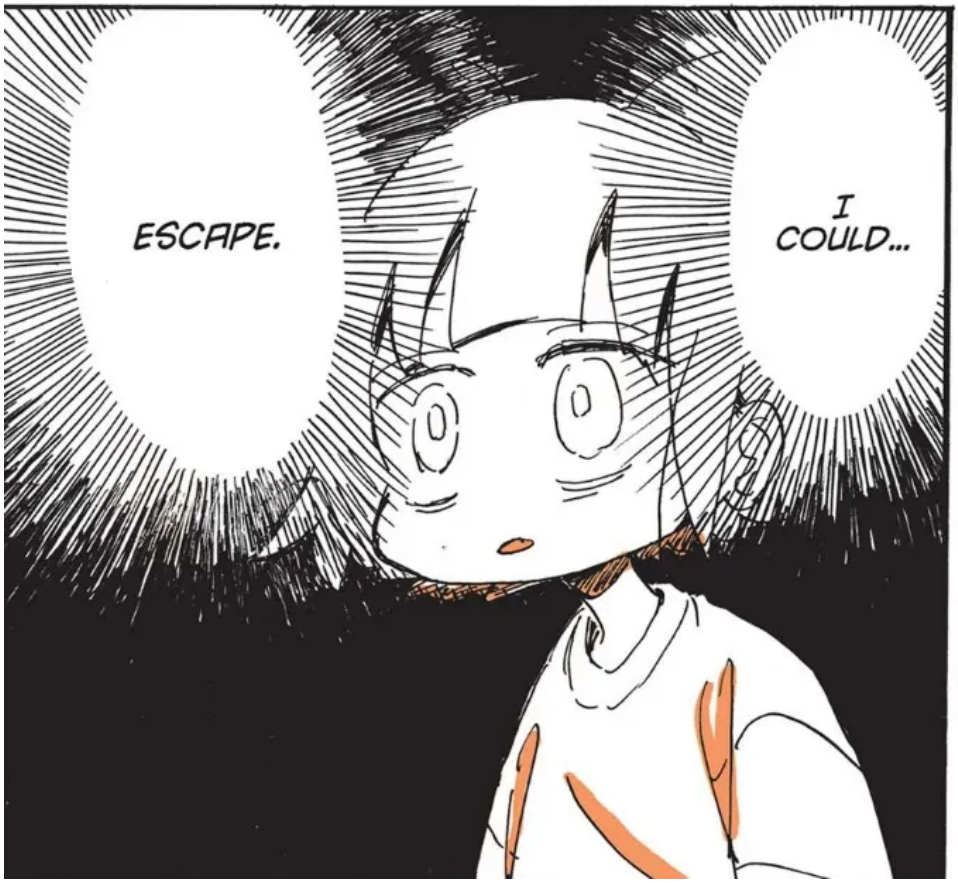

WE'VE GOT A MEETING, SO WAIT HERE. WE'LL BE BACK IN AN HOUR OR SO.
YOUR COVID RESULTS WON'T BE READY BEFORE THEN, ANYWAY.
.....
Extremely cold and hard.
Starting with an unexpected COVID-19 test...
THIS IS STANDARD PROCEDURE FOR ANYONE ADMITTED THESE DAYS.
SKWERK


I'M REAL SORRY, NOW OF ALL TIMES.
AND, LIKE...
This was the morning after my grandmother's funeral. (My family had a lot on their plates.)
we got to work on admitting me to the hospital.
SO THE THING IS, BLAH BLAH BLAH...
OH! HI, DAD?
CALLING PARENTS

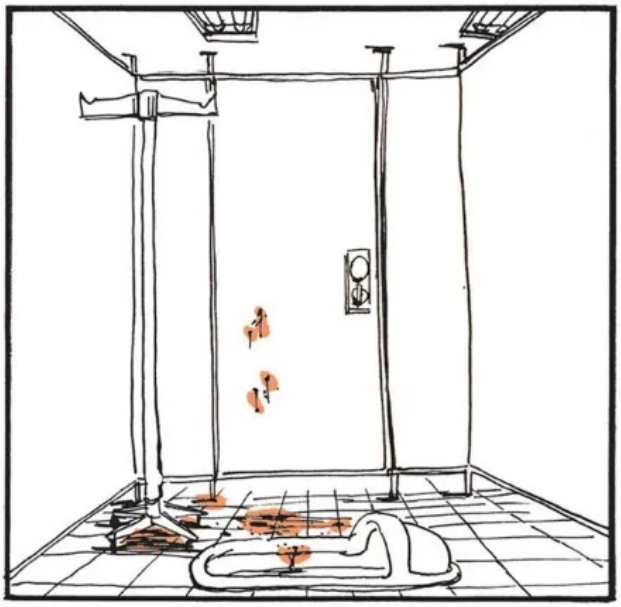

On my fifth day in the hospital...
WHEN DO YOU THINK I'LL BE RELEASED?!
MM, ANYTHING LESS THAN TWO WEEKS IS UNLIKELY.

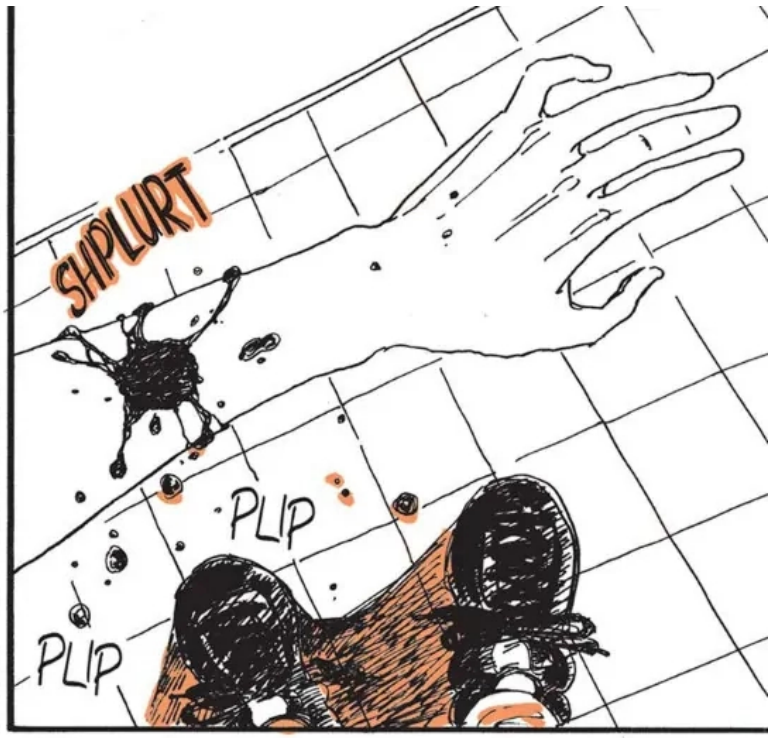
A SINGLE NURSE AROUND.
THERE'S NOT...

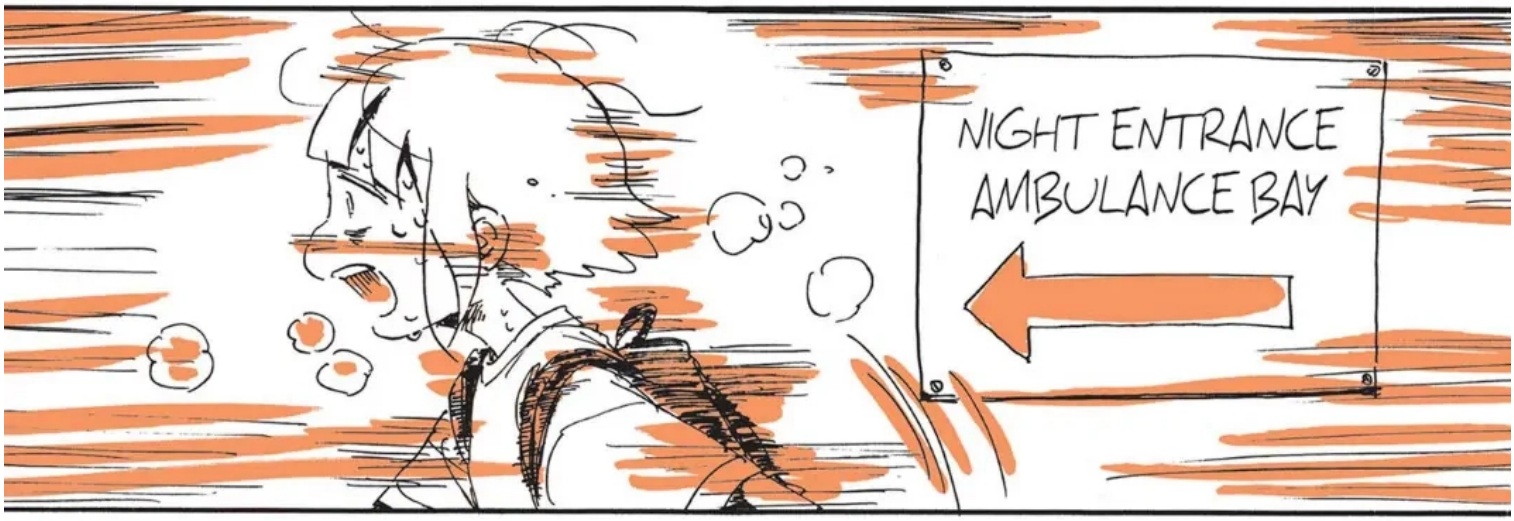
AH!

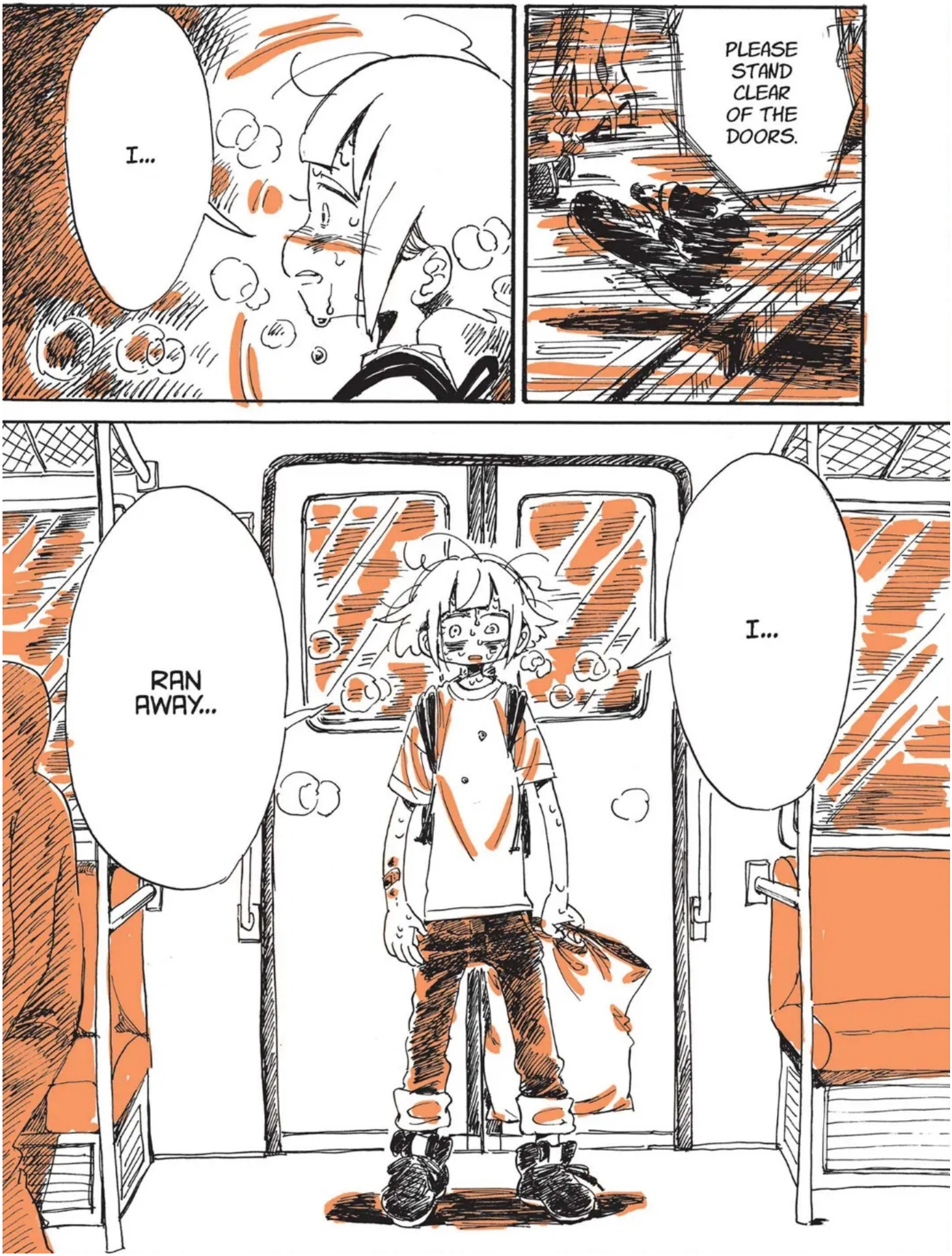

ESCAPE.
I COULD...

WHIP
NK
YA
BA-
TNK

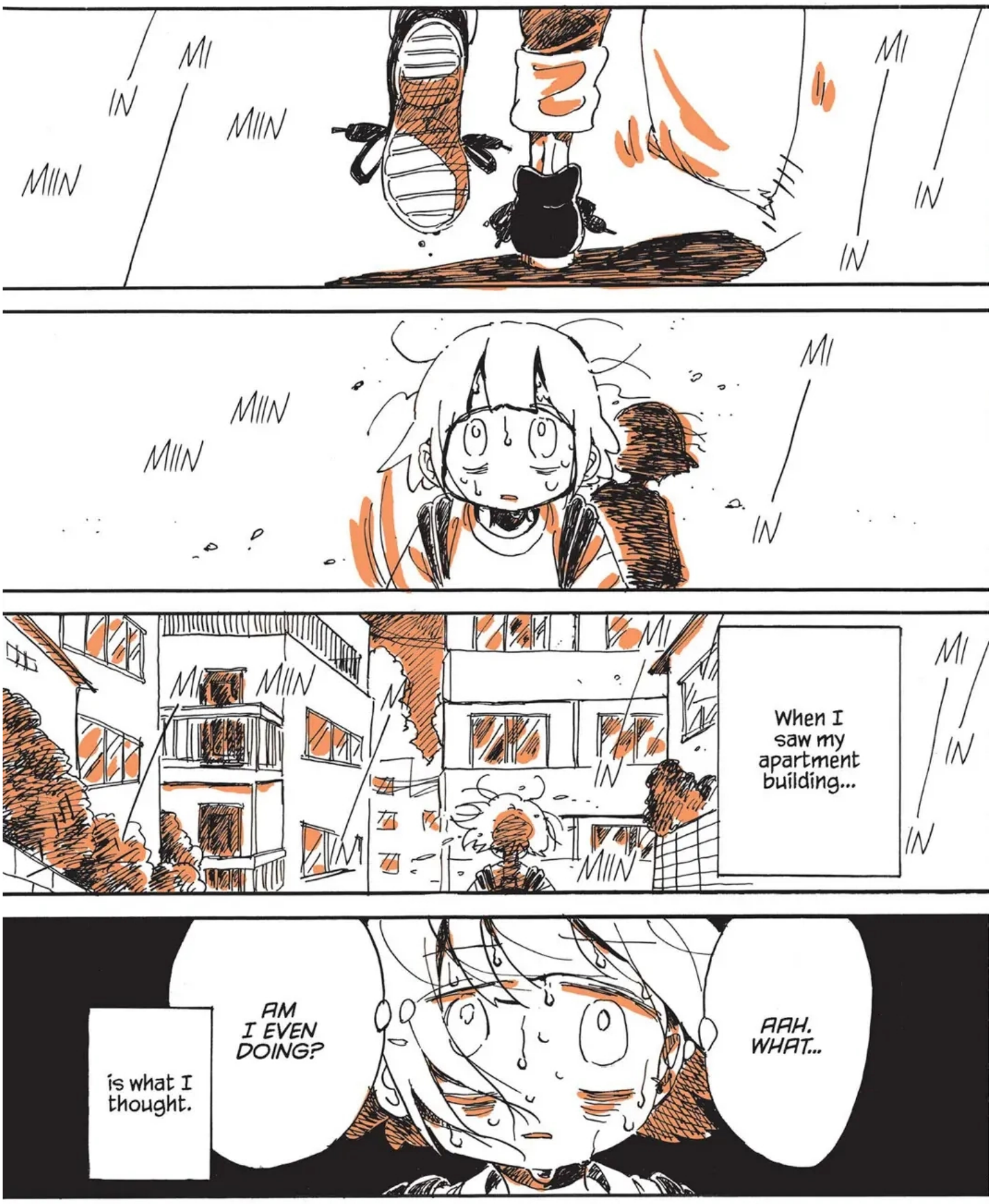



SHPLURT
PLIP
PLIP

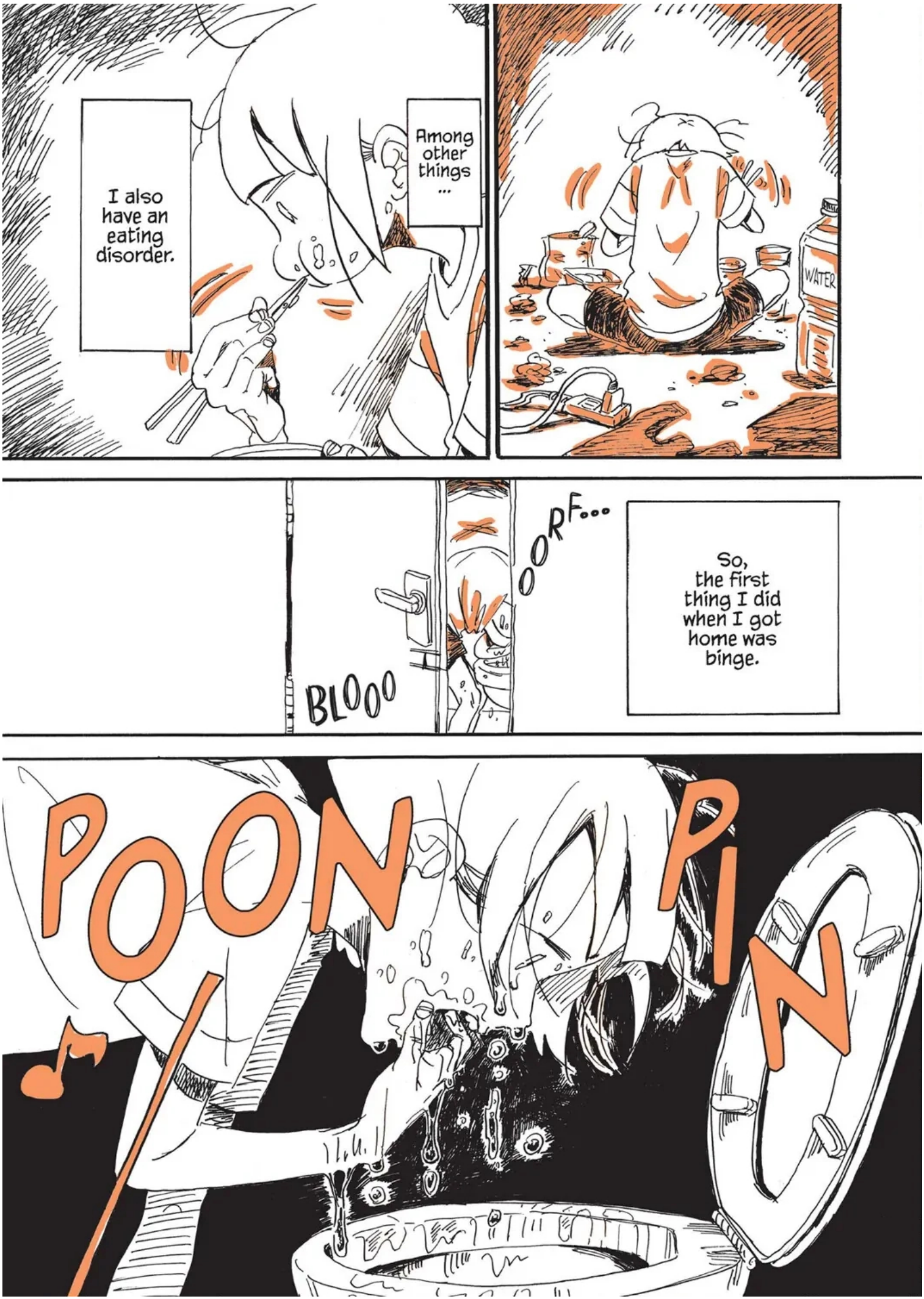

NIGHT ENTRANCE
AMBULANCE BAY

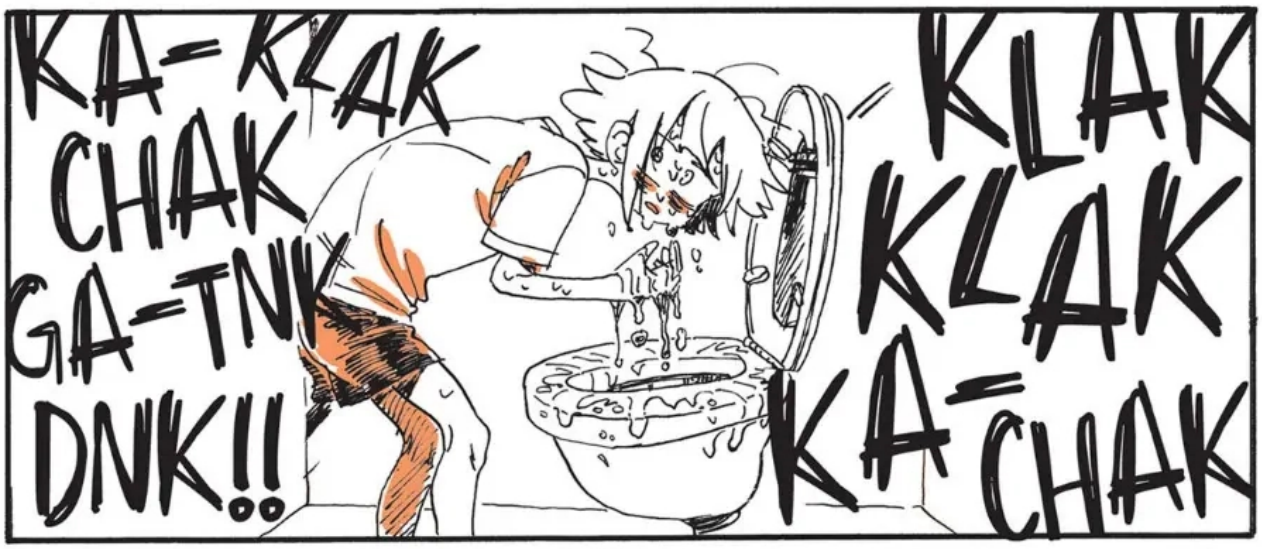

I...
PLEASE STAND CLEAR OF THE DOORS.
RAN AWAY...
I...

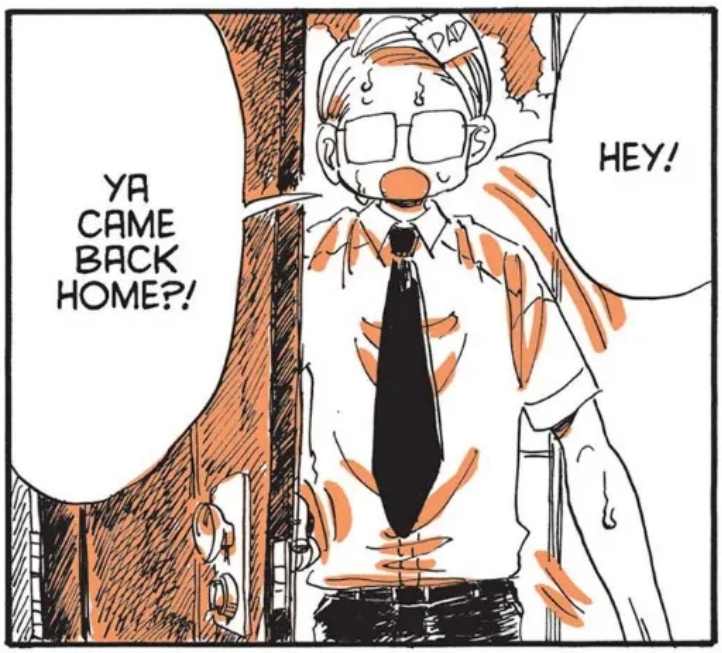
24
24
24
FESTIVAL
SOMETHING BLAND...
SOMETHING LOW-FAT...
MIIN
MIIN
MIIN
MIIN
THANKS! HAVE A GOOD DAY!


When I saw my apartment building...
AAH. WHAT...
AM I EVEN DOING?
is what I thought.

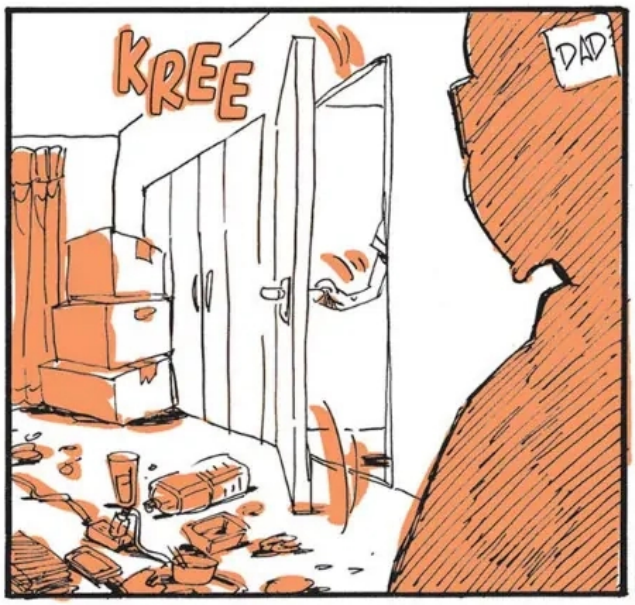
KREEE
GA-
CHAK
TH
WD
RICE PORRIDGE
2008
SALMON


I also have an eating disorder.
Among other things ...
WATER
So, the first thing I did when I got home was binge.
BLOOO
OORF...
POON
PI
N

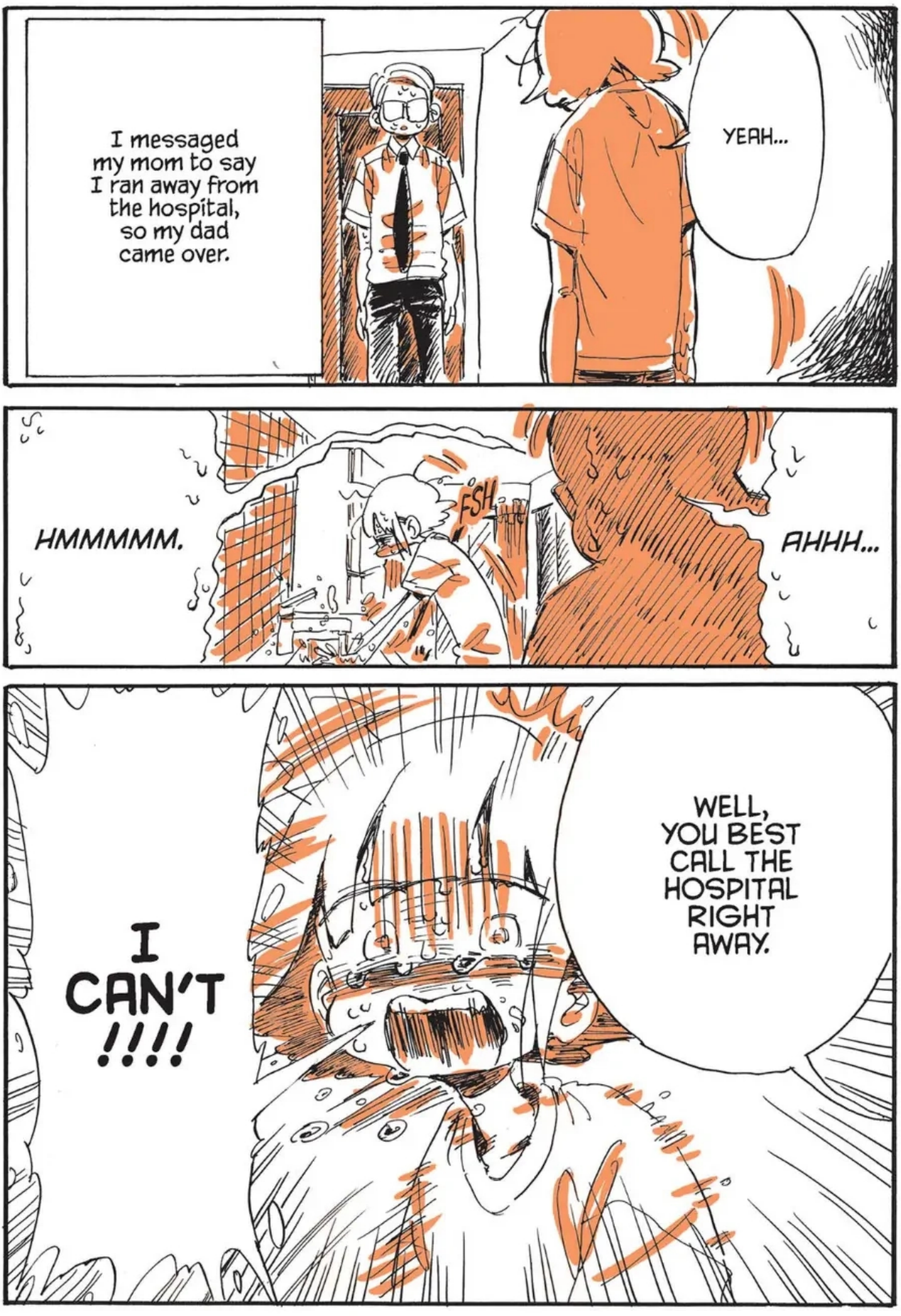

KA-KLAK
CHAK
GA-TNK
DNK!!
KLAK
KLAK
KA-CHAK

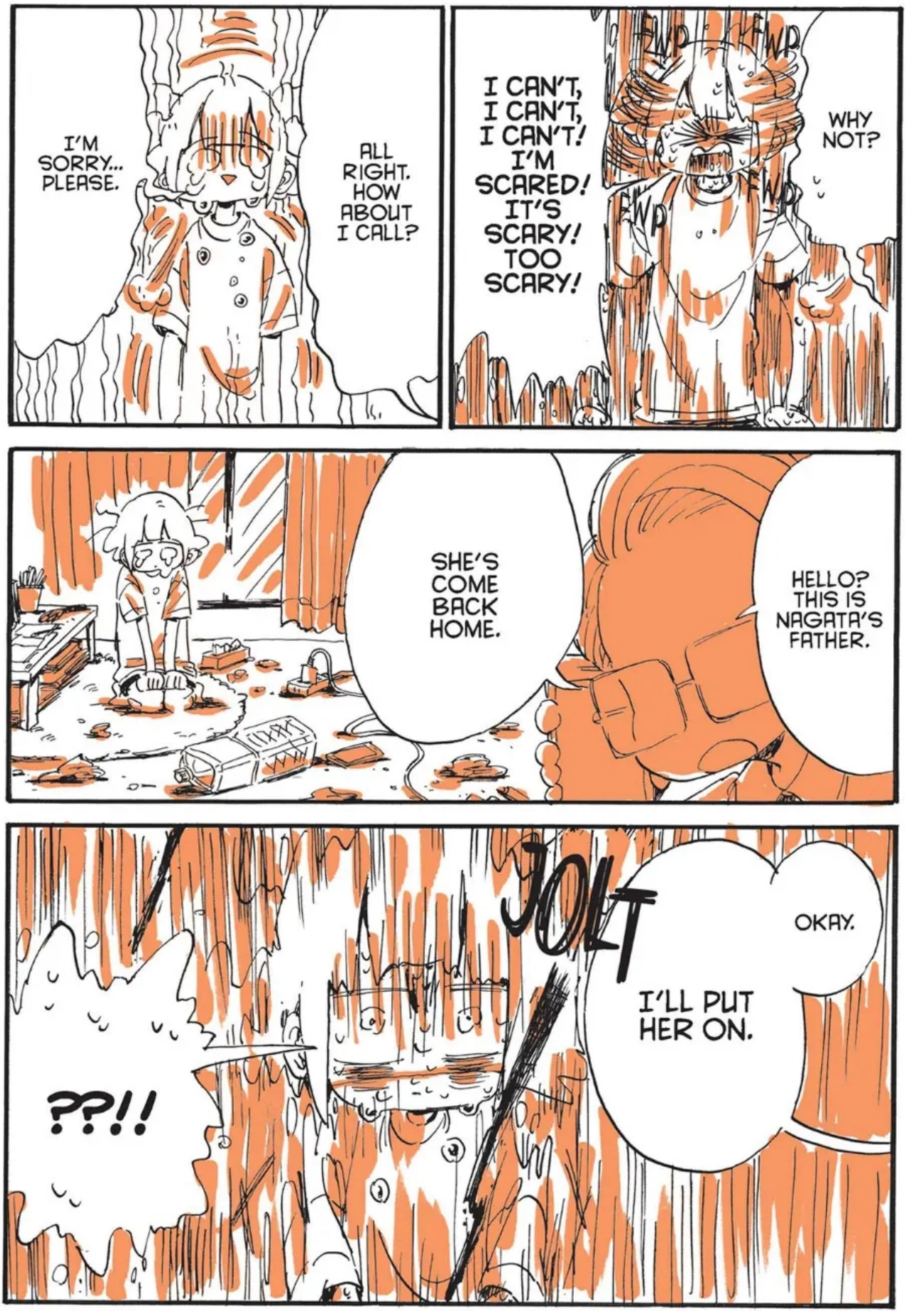

DAD
YA CAME BACK HOME?!
HEY!

KREE...


KREE
DAD

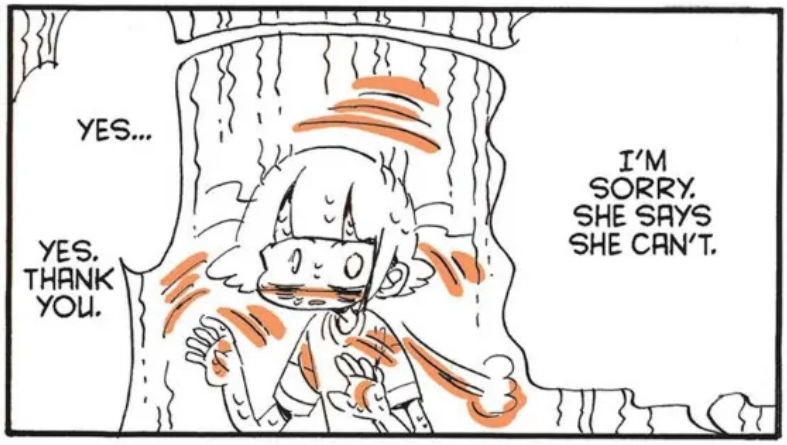
.....
DAD

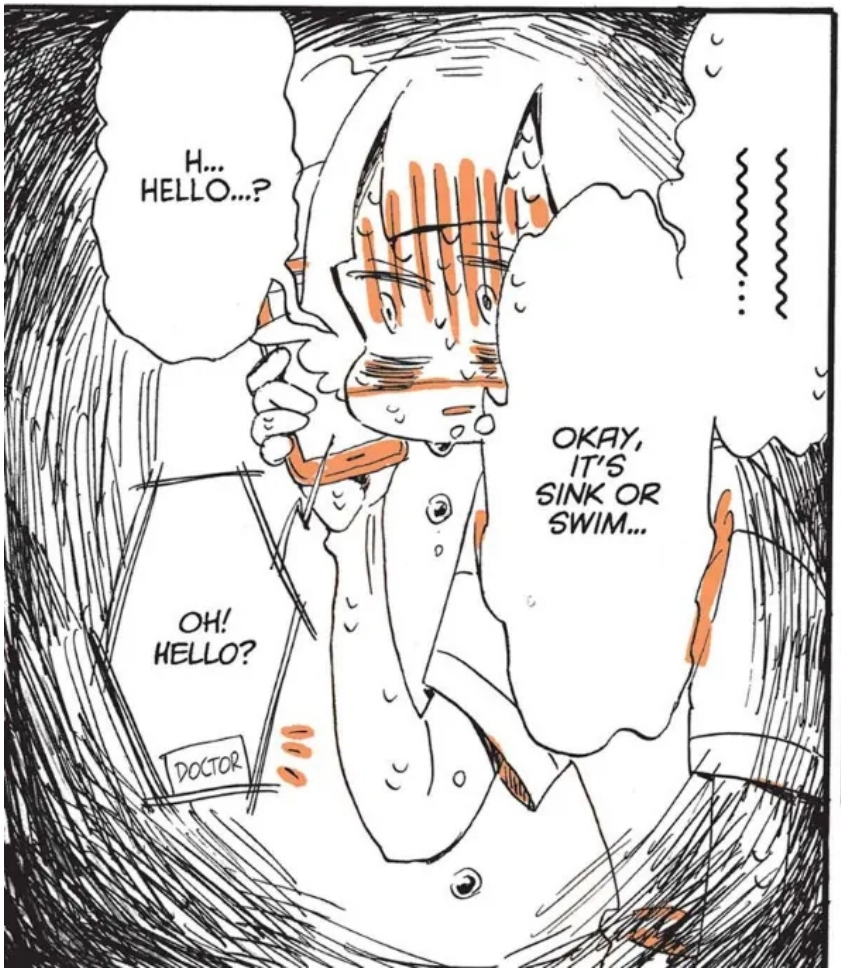

I messaged my mom to say I ran away from the hospital, so my dad came over.
YEAH...
HMMMMM.
FSH
AHHH...
I CAN'T !!!!
WELL, YOU BEST CALL THE HOSPITAL RIGHT AWAY.


I'M SORRY... PLEASE.
ALL RIGHT. HOW ABOUT I CALL?
I CAN'T, I CAN'T, I CAN'T! I'M SCARED! IT'S SCARY! TOO SCARY!
FWP
WHY NOT?
SHE'S COME BACK HOME.
HELLO? THIS IS NAGATA'S FATHER.
??!!
JOLT
I'LL PUT HER ON.
OKAY.

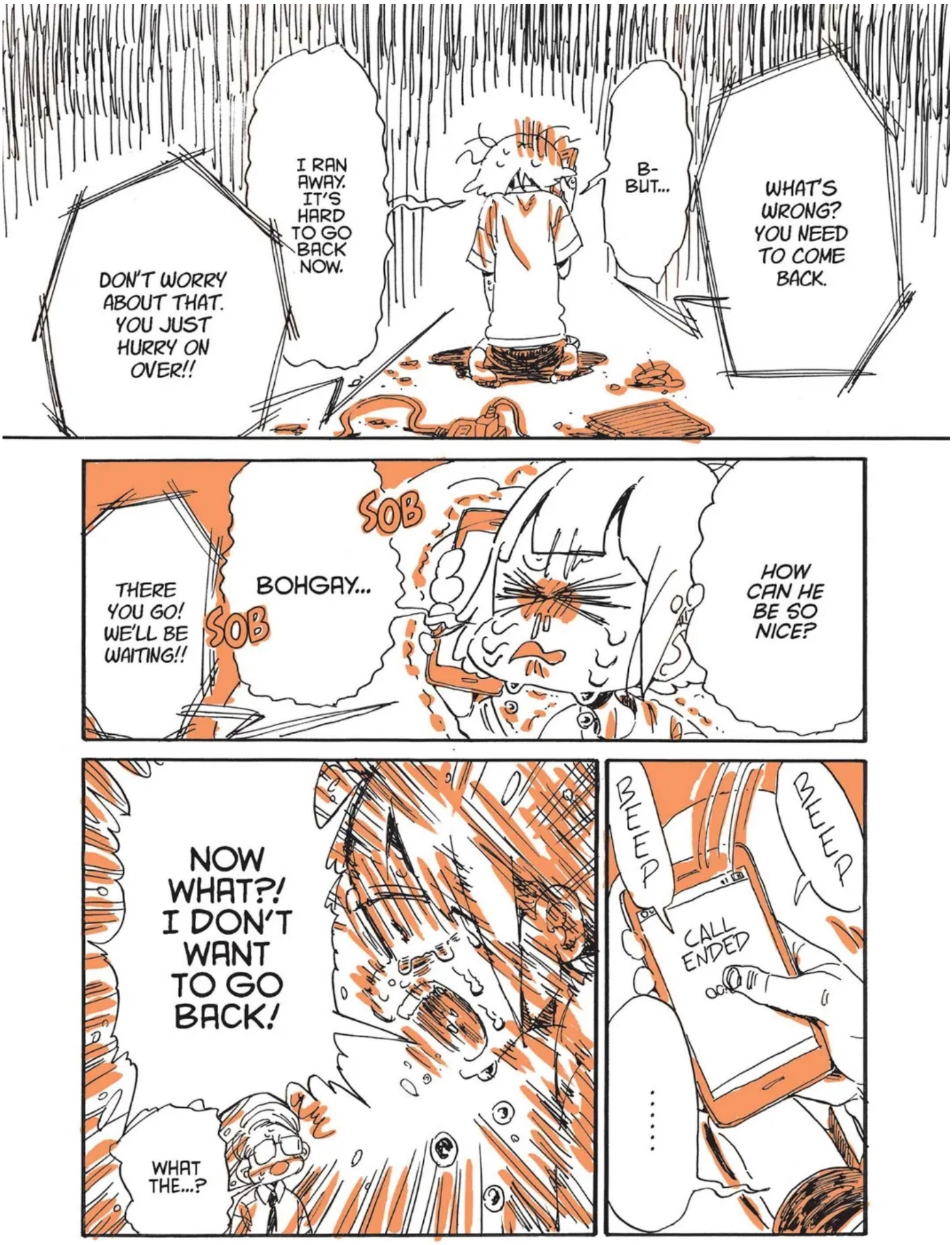
FWP
FWP
FWP
FWP
FWP
I CAN'T!!
I CAN'T,
I CAN'T,
I CAN'T!!

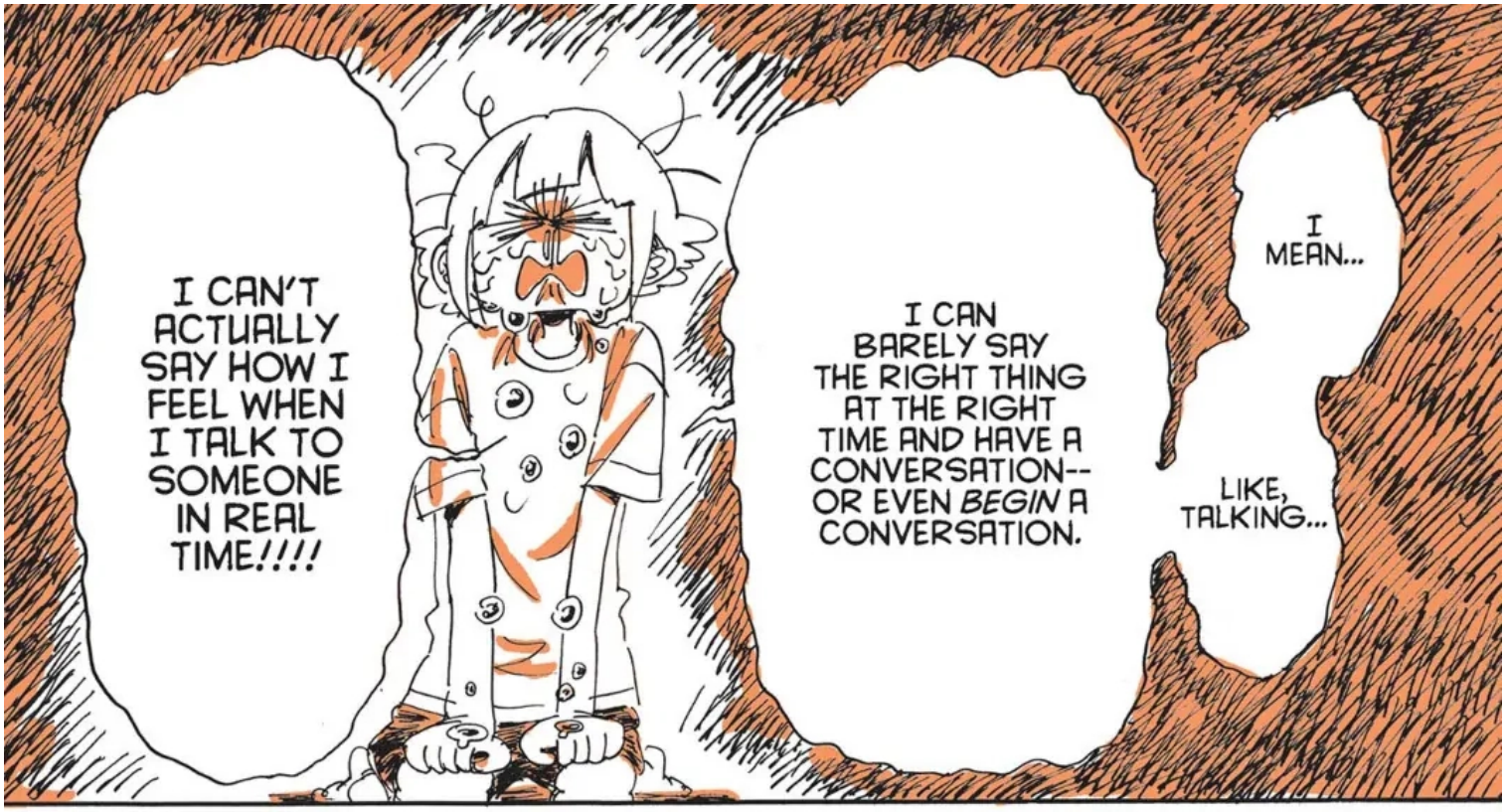
※MY PHONE.
PA
CALL
00-0000-000


YES...
YES. THANK YOU.
I'M SORRY. SHE SAYS SHE CAN'T.


H... HELLO...?
.....
OKAY, IT'S SINK OR SWIM...
OH! HELLO?
DOCTOR

YAGH
!!!

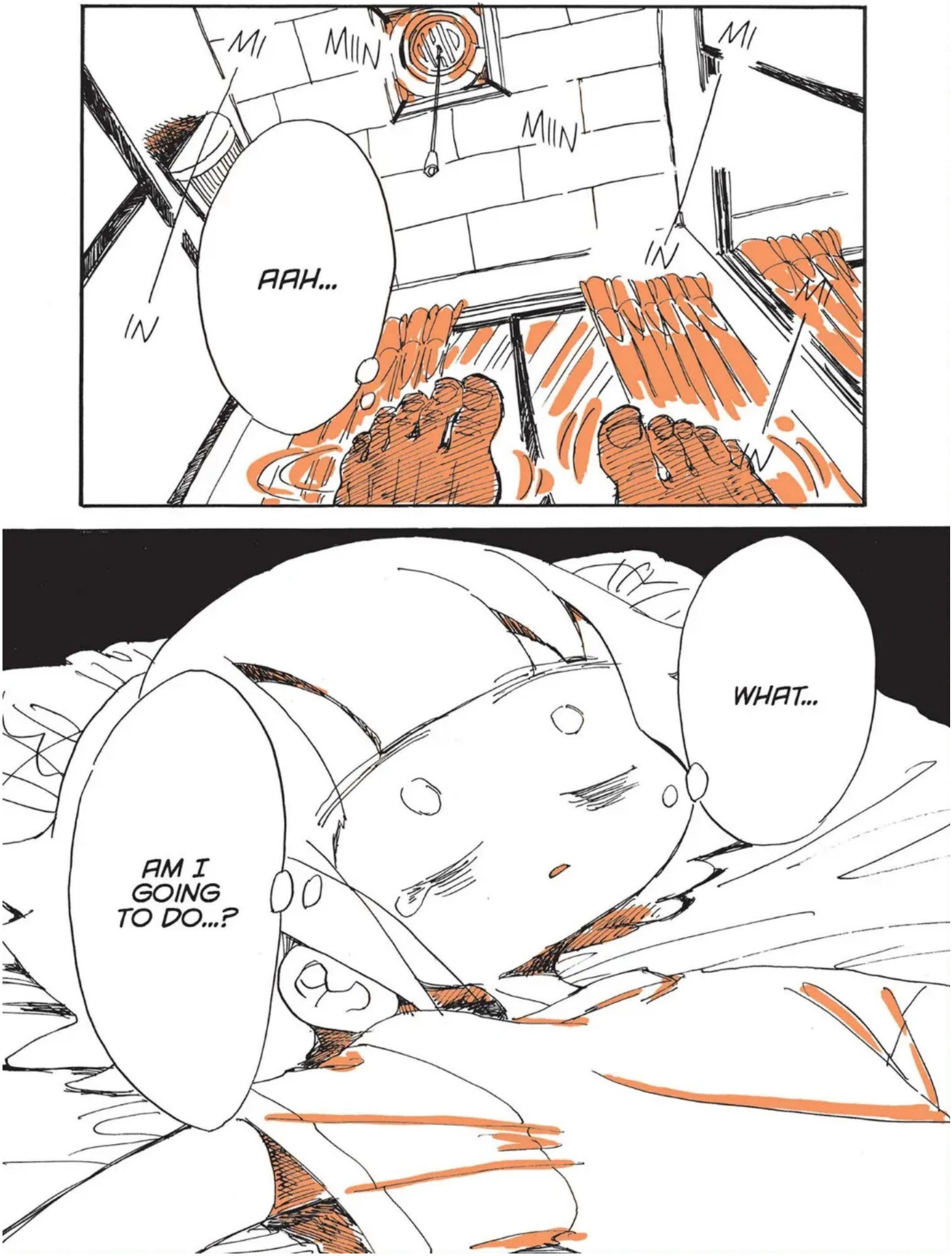

I RAN AWAY. IT'S HARD TO GO BACK NOW.
B-BUT...
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU NEED TO COME BACK.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT. YOU JUST HURRY ON OVER!!
SOB
SOB
BOHGAY...
THERE YOU GO! WE'LL BE WAITING!!
HOW CAN HE BE SO NICE?
NOW WHAT?! I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK!
WHAT THE...?
BEEP
MUUU
CALL ENDED
.....


I CAN'T ACTUALLY SAY HOW I FEEL WHEN I TALK TO SOMEONE IN REAL TIME!!!!
I CAN BARELY SAY THE RIGHT THING AT THE RIGHT TIME AND HAVE A CONVERSATION-- OR EVEN *BEGIN* A CONVERSATION.
I MEAN...
LIKE, TALKING...

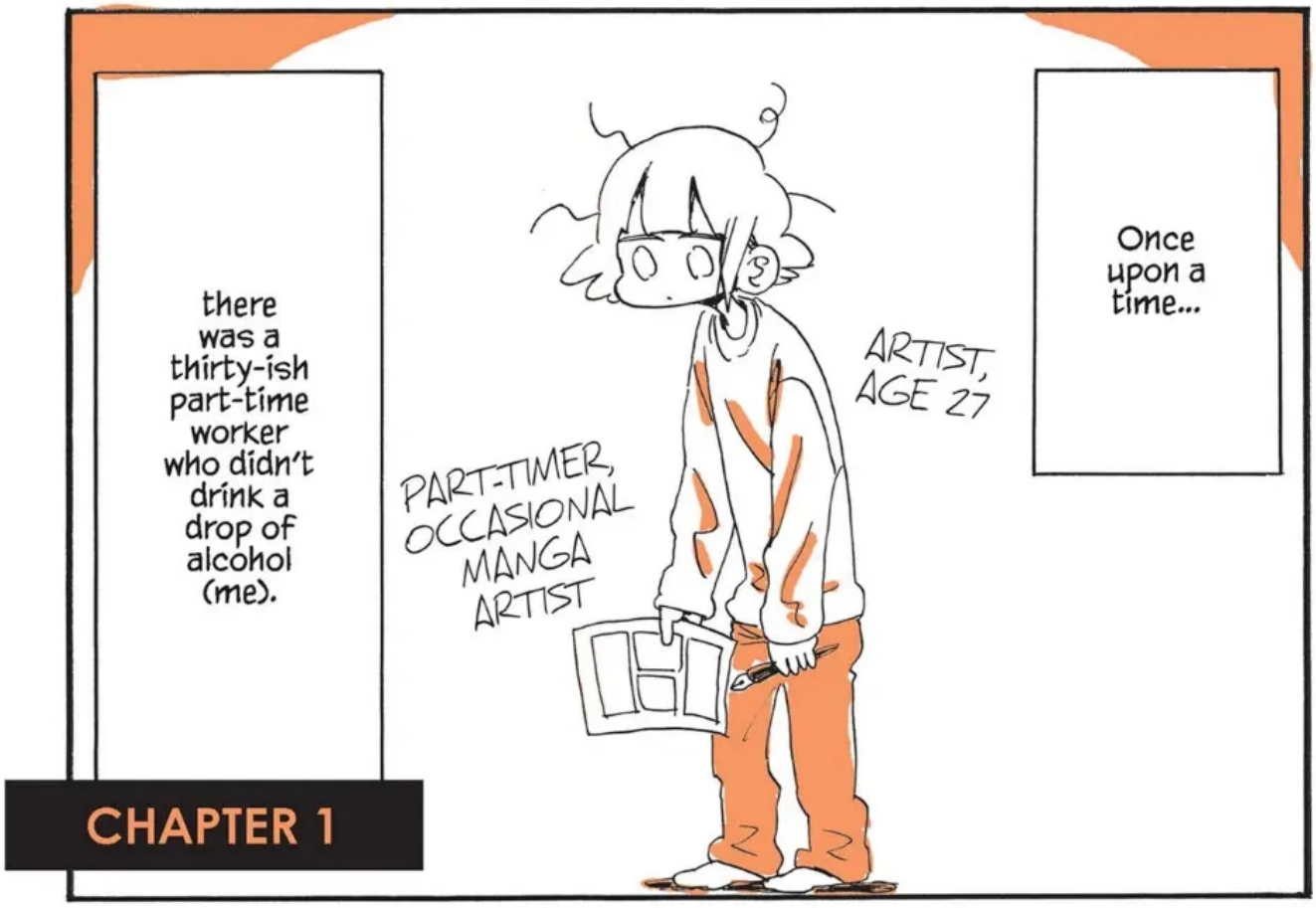
OKAY.
YES...
WE'LL DO THAT.
THE EPITOME OF PATHETIC
UNH!
UNH!
SHE'S SAYING SHE'S NOT GOING BACK...
*AH,* HELLO? THIS IS NAGATA'S FATHER.

AND WE'RE SUPPOSED TO FEED YOU RICE PORRIDGE.
HE SAID IF HE'S GONNA LET YOU STAY AT HOME TONIGHT, YOU CAN'T DRINK A DROP.
I HAD LITERALLY STARTED EATING THREE SERVINGS OF RICE PORRIDGE THAT VERY DAY.

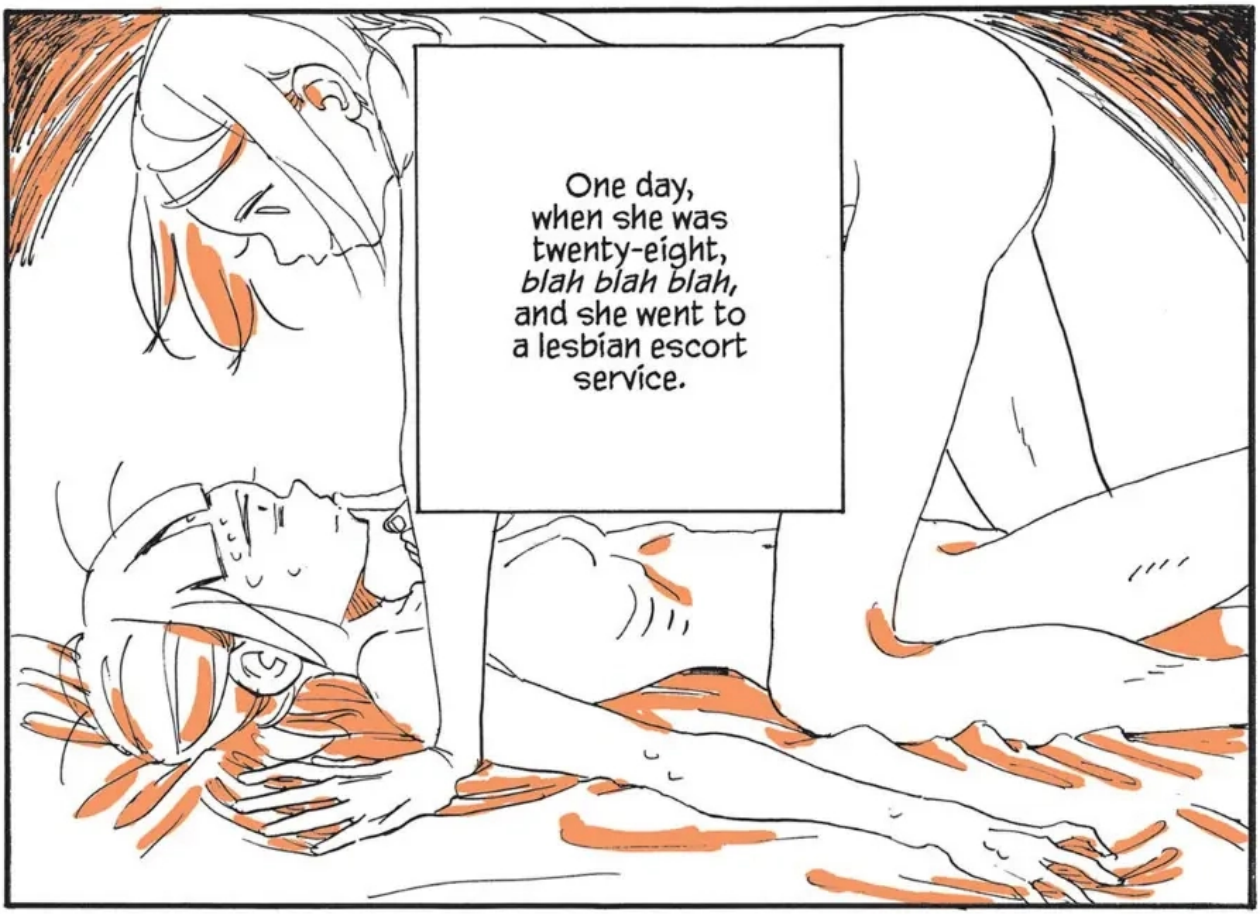
COME ON HOME.
DO ONE THING I SAY AT LEAST.
MIIN MIIN
MIIN
MP
WHU
.....
WE'RE HOME.
I'M HOME...
AH, THERE YOU ARE!

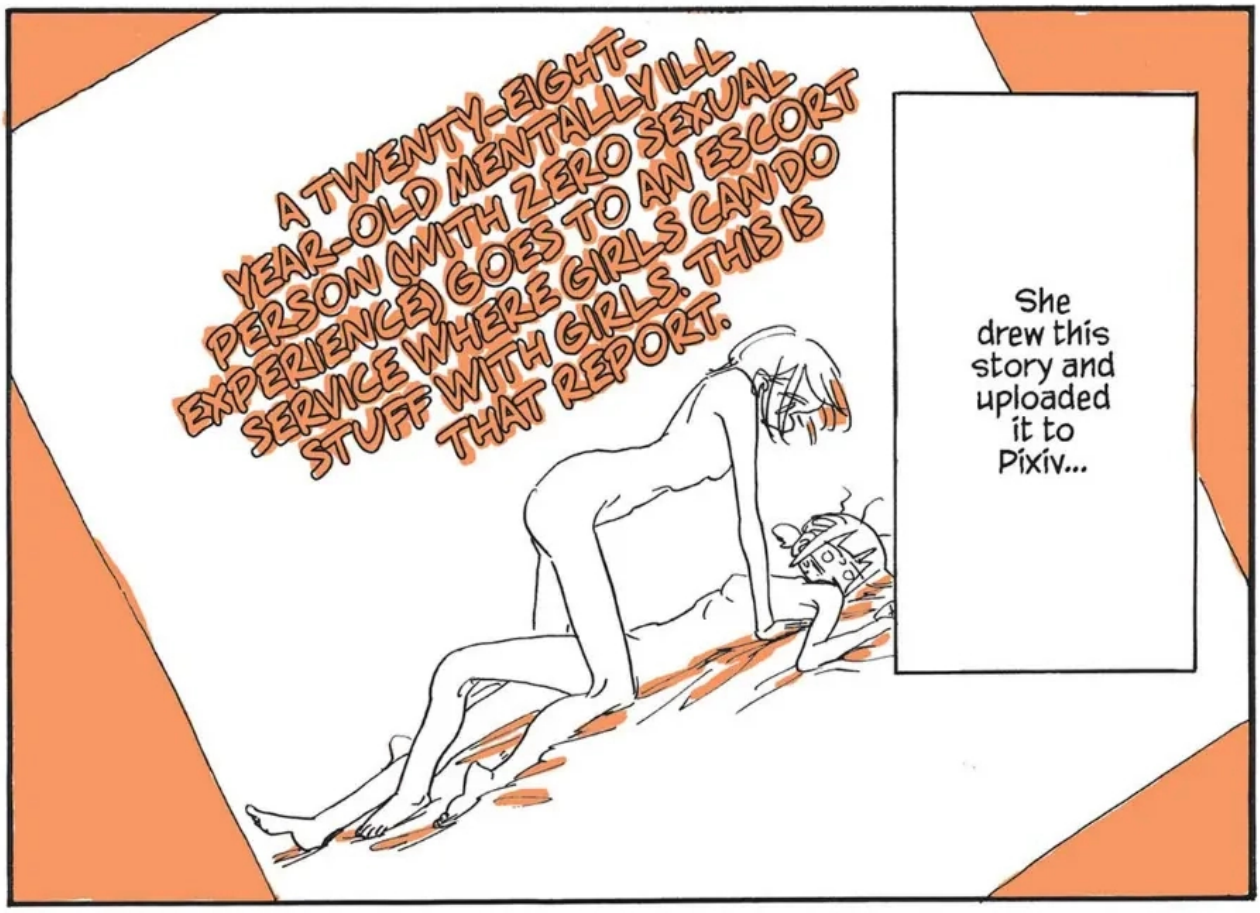

AAH...
WHAT...
AM I GOING TO DO...?

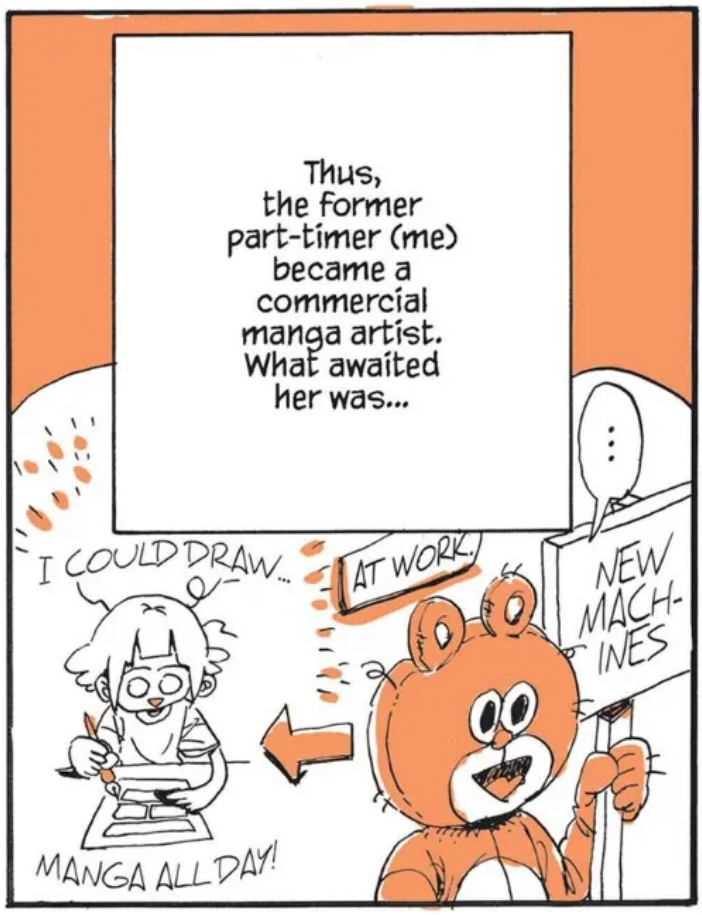
My Pancreas Broke
But My Life
Got Better


Once upon a time...
ARTIST, AGE 27
PART-TIMER, OCCASIONAL MANGA ARTIST
there was a thirty-ish part-time worker who didn't drink a drop of alcohol (me).

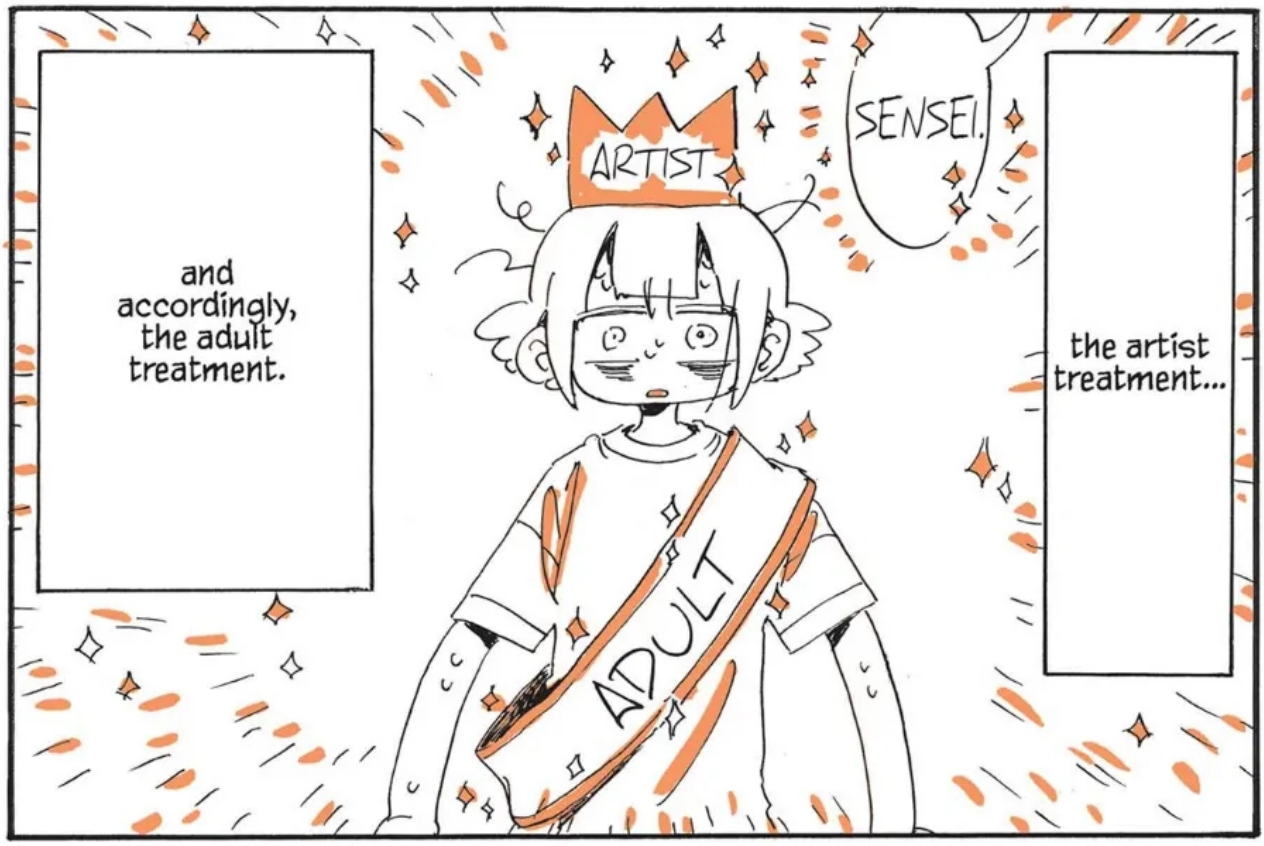
# CHAPTER 1


One day, when she was twenty-eight, *blah blah blah*, and she went to a lesbian escort service.

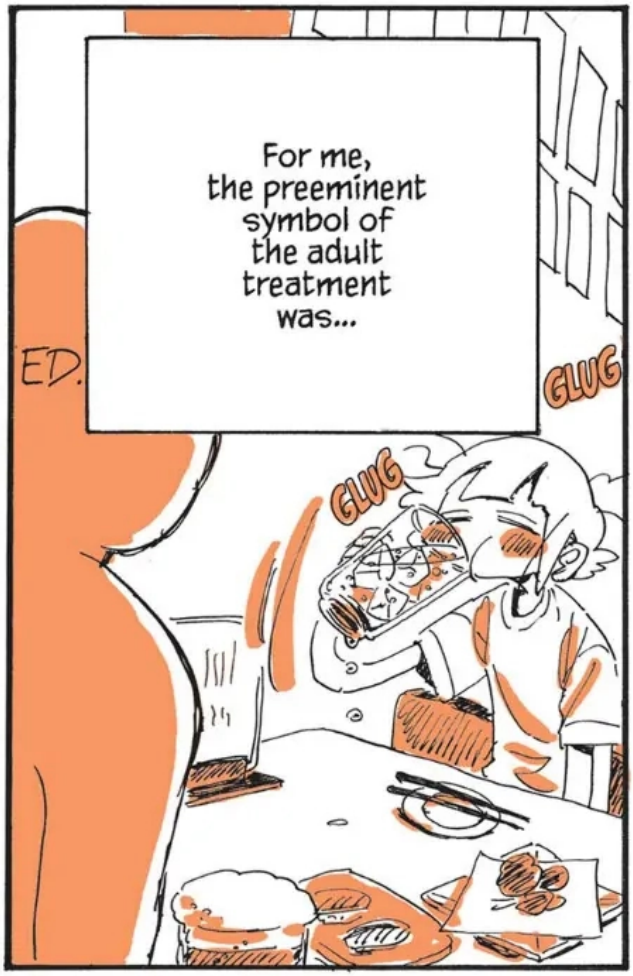

A TWENTY-EIGHT-YEAR-OLD MENTALLY ILL PERSON (WITH ZERO SEXUAL EXPERIENCE) GOES TO AN ESCORT SERVICE WHERE GIRLS CAN DO STUFF WITH GIRLS. THIS IS THAT REPORT.
She drew this story and uploaded it to Pixiv...


Thus, the former part-timer (me) became a commercial manga artist. What awaited her was...
I COULD DRAW...
AT WORK.
NEW MACH-INES
MANGA ALL DAY!

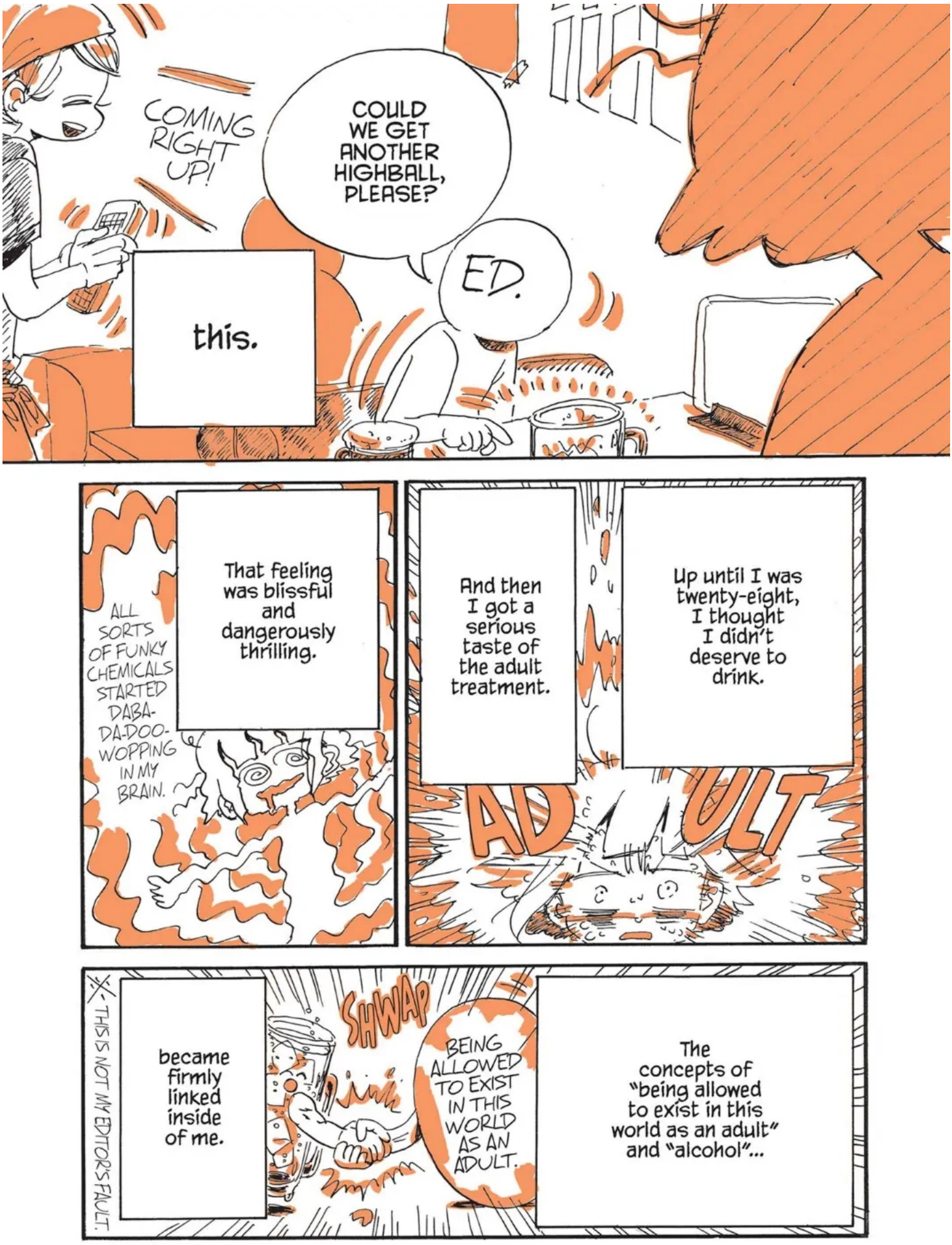
and somehow, happily, that story got turned into a book.
MY LESBIAN EXPERIENCE WITH LONELINESS

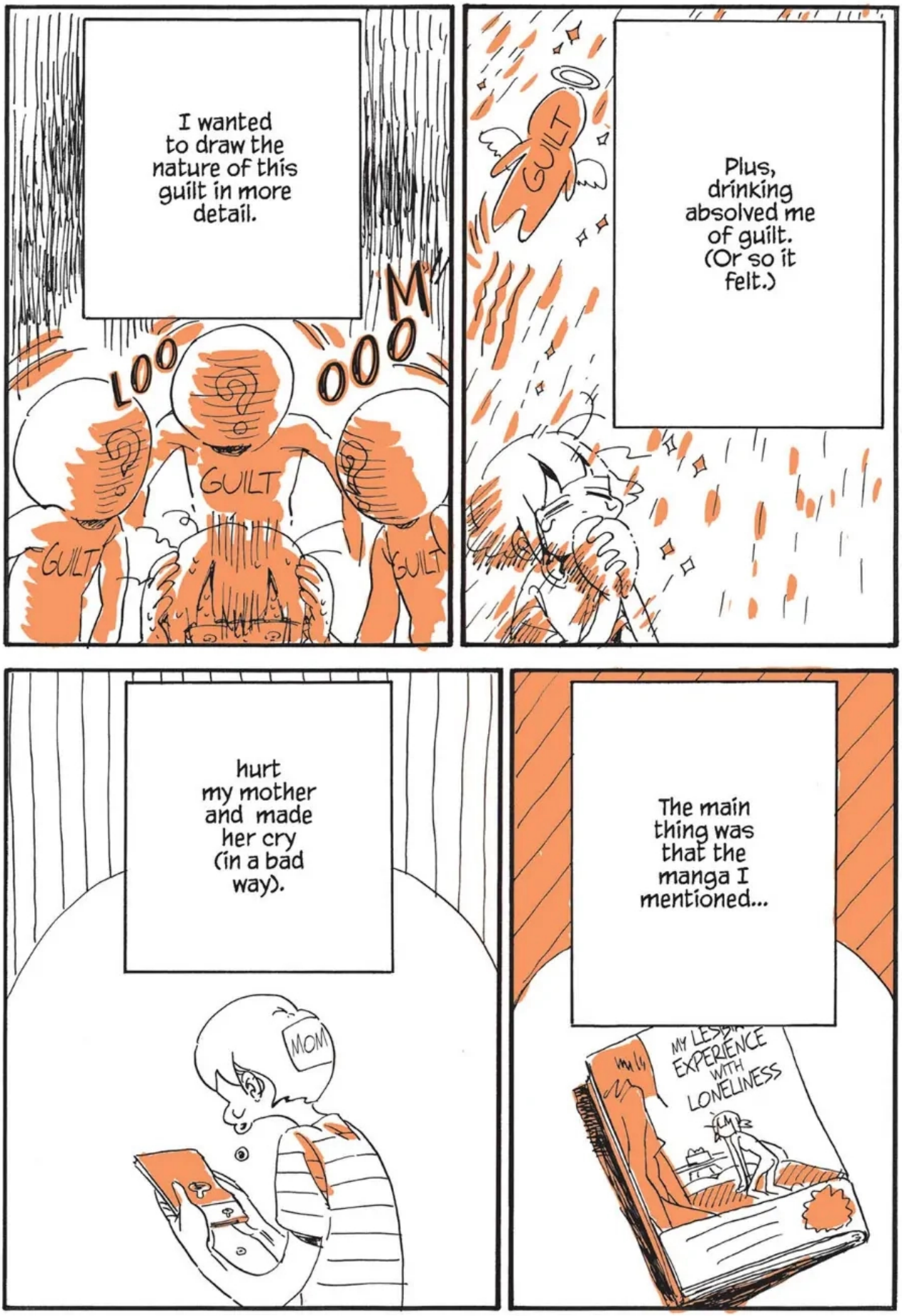

and accordingly, the adult treatment.
ARTIST
SENSEI.
ADULT
the artist treatment...

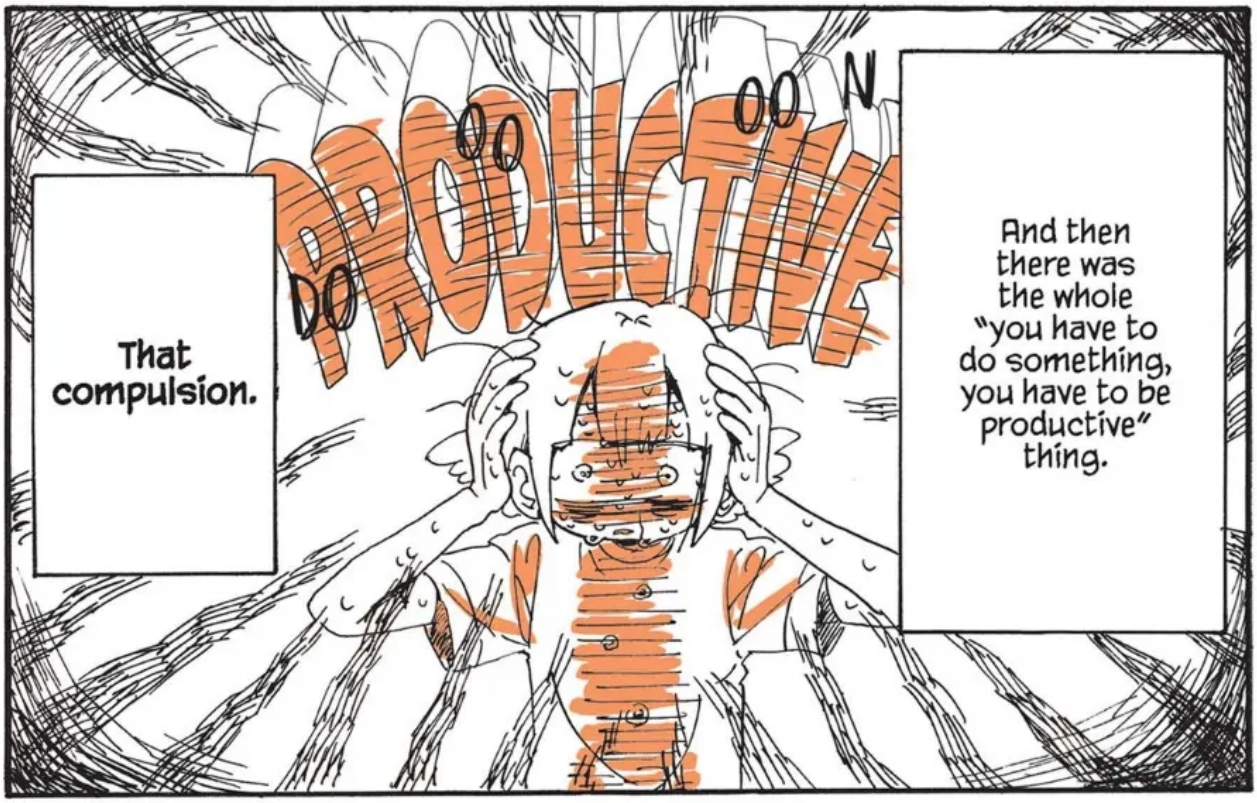
ONE SEC!
EXCUSE ME!
ED.
PWAH!
TNK

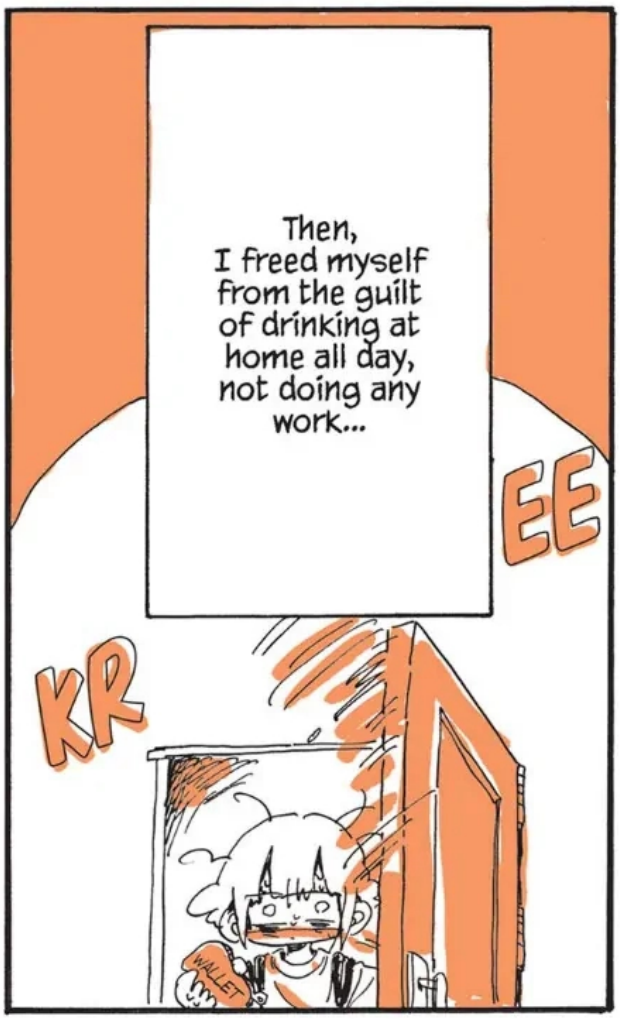

For me, the preeminent symbol of the adult treatment was...
ED.
GLUG
GLUG

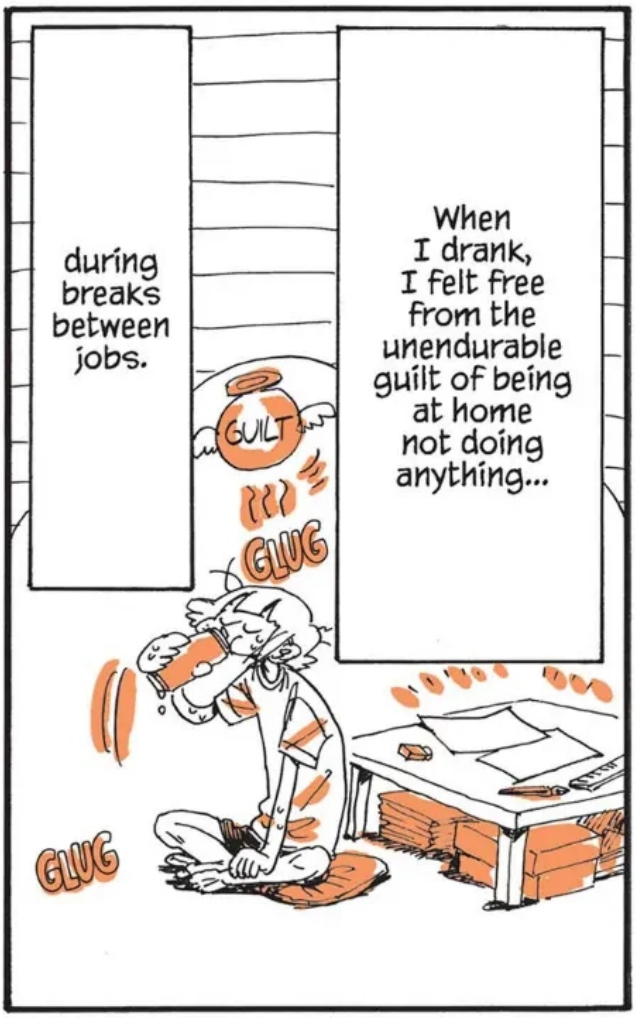
※Editor.

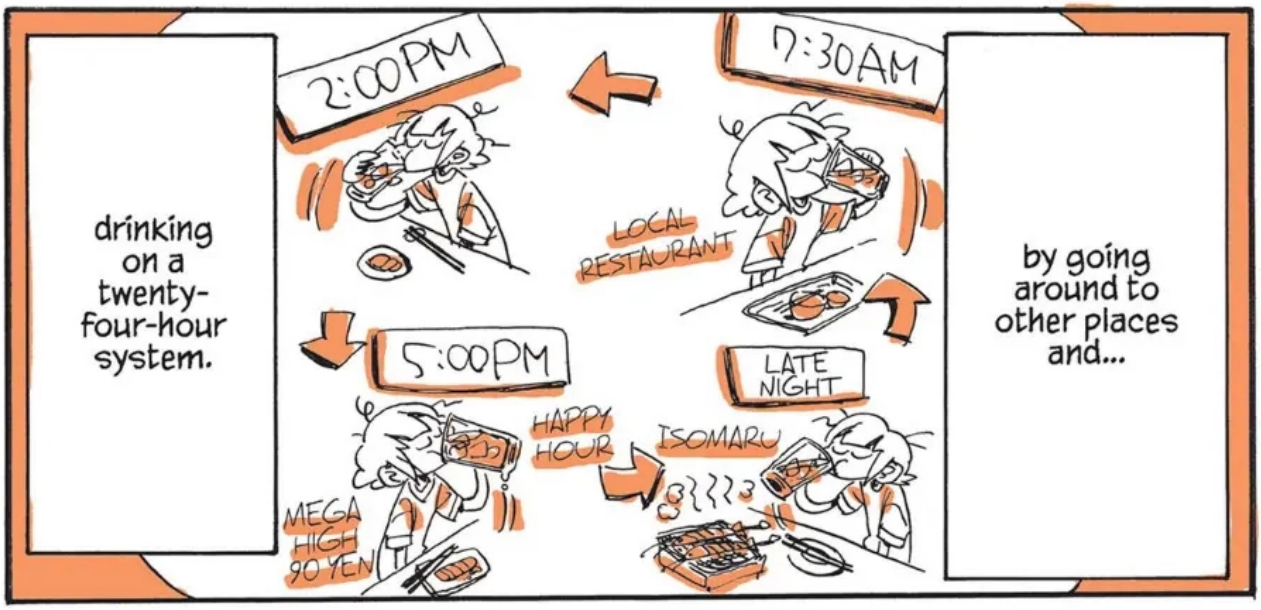

COMING RIGHT UP!
COULD WE GET ANOTHER HIGHBALL, PLEASE?
ED.
this.
That feeling was blissful and dangerously thrilling.
ALL SORTS OF FUNKY CHEMICALS STARTED DABA-DA-DOO-WOPPING IN MY BRAIN.
And then I got a serious taste of the adult treatment.
Up until I was twenty-eight, I thought I didn't deserve to drink.
AD ULT
THIS IS NOT MY EDITOR'S FAULT.
became firmly linked inside of me.
SHWAP
BEING ALLOWED TO EXIST IN THIS WORLD AS AN ADULT.
The concepts of "being allowed to exist in this world as an adult" and "alcohol"...


I wanted to draw the nature of this guilt in more detail.
LOO
OOO
M
GUILT
GUILT
GUILT
GUILT
Plus, drinking absolved me of guilt. (Or so it felt.)
hurt my mother and made her cry (in a bad way).
MOM
The main thing was that the manga I mentioned...
EXPERIENCE WITH LONELINESS


That compulsion.
DO PRODUCTIVE OO N
And then there was the whole "you have to do something, you have to be productive" thing.


Then, I freed myself from the guilt of drinking at home all day, not doing any work...
EE
KR
WALLET


during breaks between jobs.
When I drank, I felt free from the unendurable guilt of being at home not doing anything...
GUILT
GLUG
GLUG


drinking on a twenty-four-hour system.
2:00PM
7:30AM
LOCAL RESTAURANT
5:00PM
LATE NIGHT
HAPPY HOUR
ISOMARU
MEGA HIGH 90 YEN
by going around to other places and...

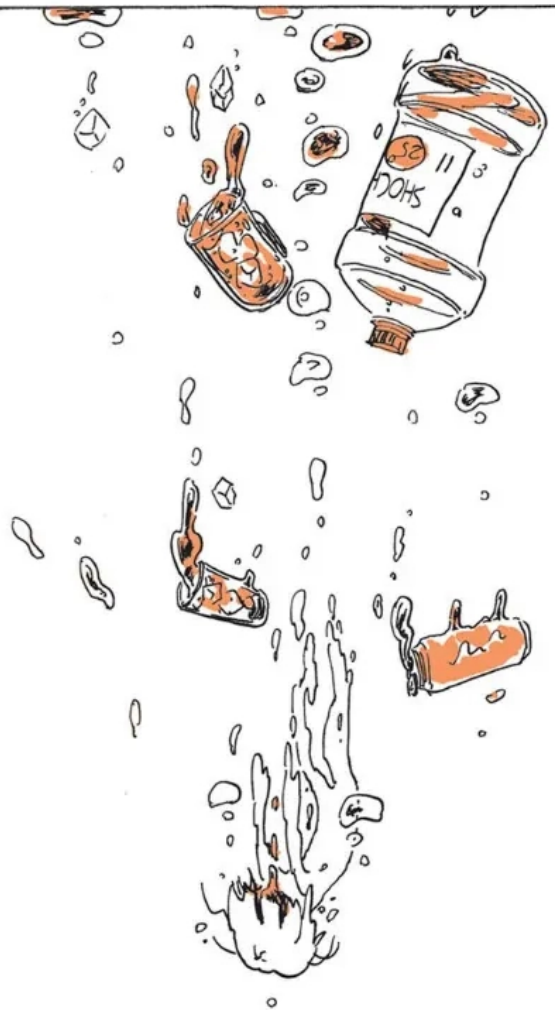
was like some kind of basic existence fee that came along with breathing.
DATE: XX OO
BASIC FEE
The guilt...

I even tried to erase the hazy guilt I felt about simply being alive.
WHAT? ME?!
HAZY GUILT

PLEASE DOOO!!
IDEA AT THE TIME
SET YOU FREE...
I SHALL...
These days, I think it's probably impossible to be accepted and freed from all this.

It took
surprisingly little
time for me to do a
complete one-eighty.

I went from a life
of sobriety to being
so anxious I couldn't
stand it unless
I drank 24/7,
365 days
a year.



a fridge (from when I lived alone) with ice in it...

ICE

In my room, I had a 2.7 liter bottle of shochu...

SHOCHU

25°

2.7ℓ

AT THE TIME, I WAS LIVING AT HOME.

CALPIS

LEMON JUICE

SODA

and soda water, lemon juice, and other things to mix with the shochu. Always.

I started drinking beer...

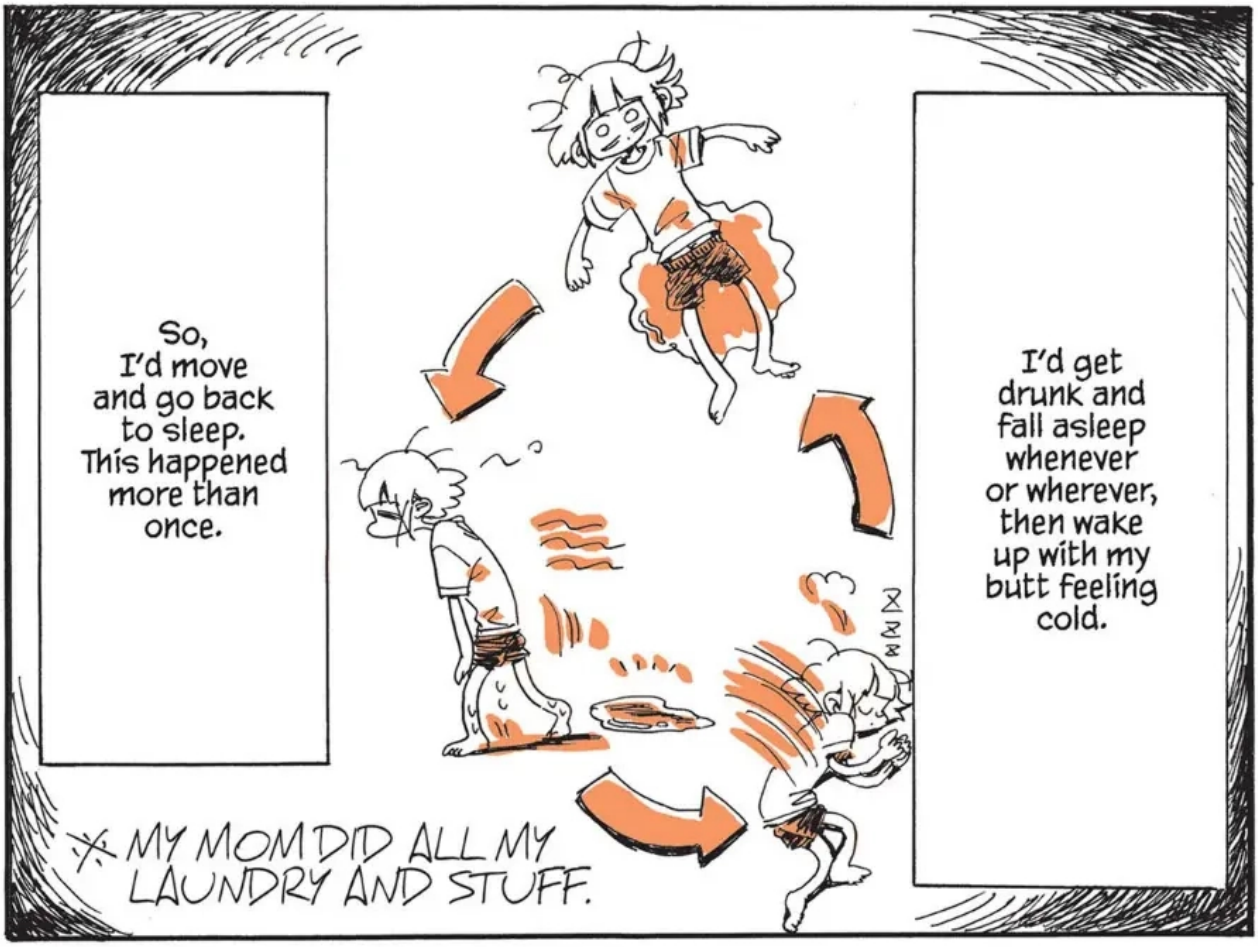
I CAN'T STAND BEER, SO MAYBE IF I MAKE A RULE THAT THAT'S *ALL* I DRINK, I'LL DRINK LESS!!

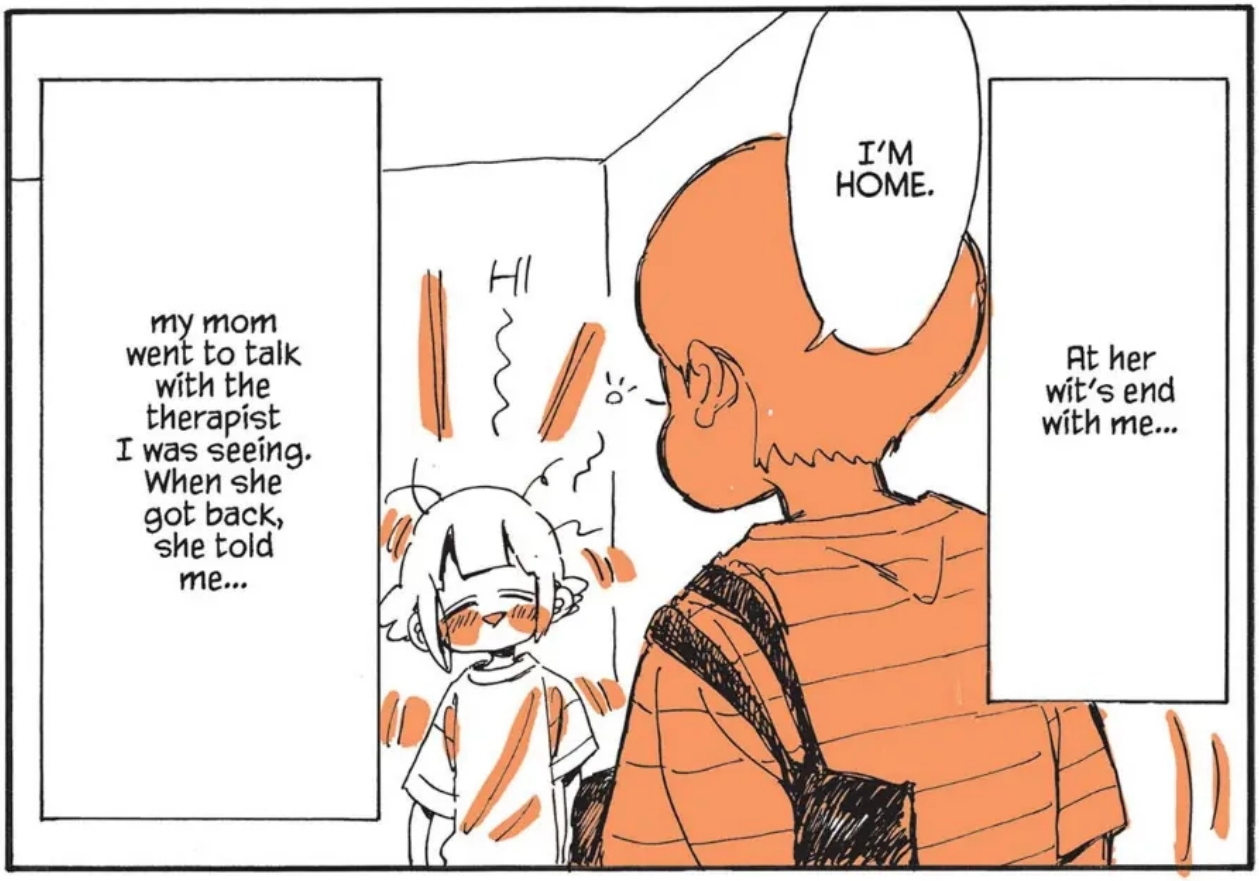
Or...

STUFFED
and eventually, I was buying six or seven tall cans every morning.

Instead (?), I got so drunk, I wet the bed a bunch.
THE WORST.

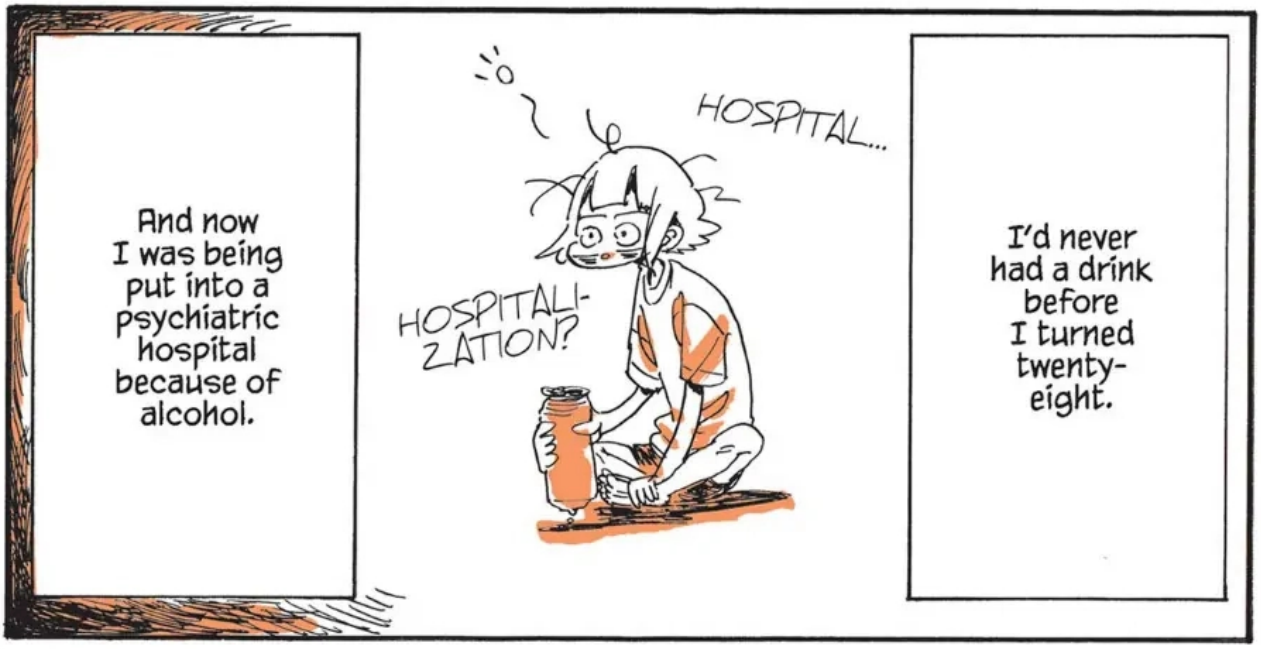
Even though this was the life I was living, I don't have a single funny story about a drinking disaster.
OR BOUGHT SOME WEIRD THINGY.
LIKE HOW I DID SOMETHING SILLY...


So, I'd move and go back to sleep. This happened more than once.
I'd get drunk and fall asleep whenever or wherever, then wake up with my butt feeling cold.
※ MY MOM DID ALL MY LAUNDRY AND STUFF.


my mom went to talk with the therapist I was seeing. When she got back, she told me...
I'M HOME.
HI
At her wit's end with me...

MOM
YOU SHOULD MAYBE SPEND SOME TIME IN THE HOSPITAL.
THE DOCTOR SAID THAT...

HOSPITAL


And now I was being put into a psychiatric hospital because of alcohol.
HOSPITAL...
HOSPITALI-ZATION?
I'd never had a drink before I turned twenty-eight.

He wrote me a recommendation for a nearby psychiatric hospital.

PRIMARY PHYSICIAN

CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE YOU ARE FORCED TO BE SOBER FOR A WHILE.

The intent was to...

# CHAPTER 2

That said, before COVID, you could go out, as well as have visitors. When I think about it now, it was pretty laid-back.

I'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE!!

ALCO-HOL

I think every hospital has a no-drinking rule.

I'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE!!

ALCO-HOL

HUGE SUPER-MARKET

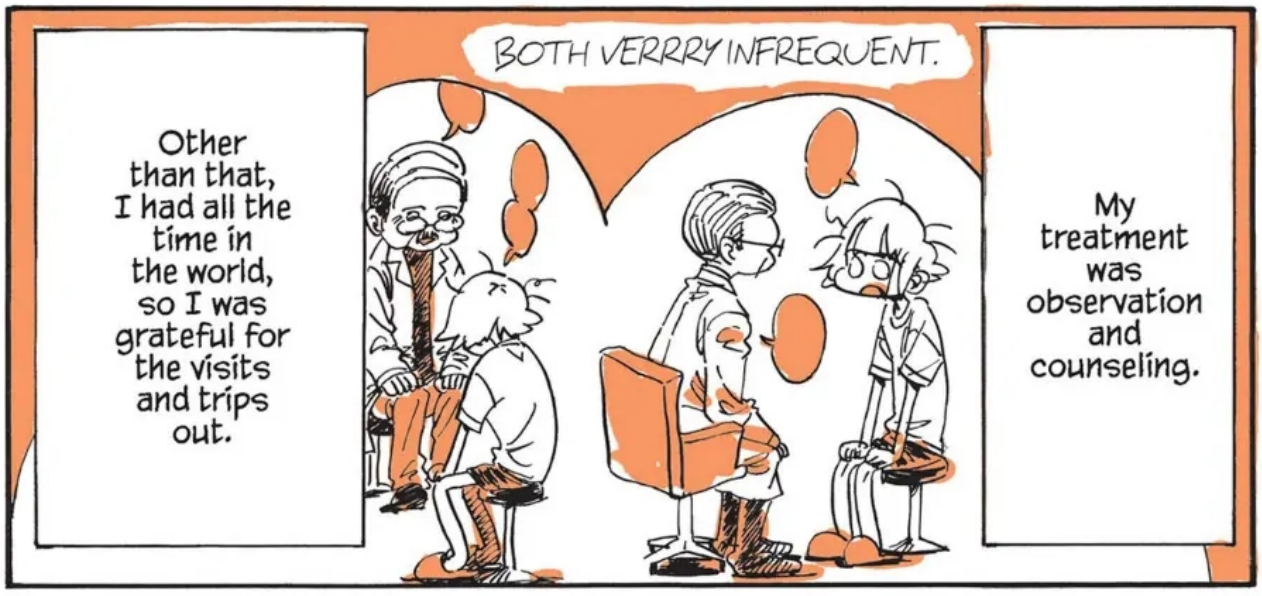
CON-VENIENCE STORE

HOSPITAL

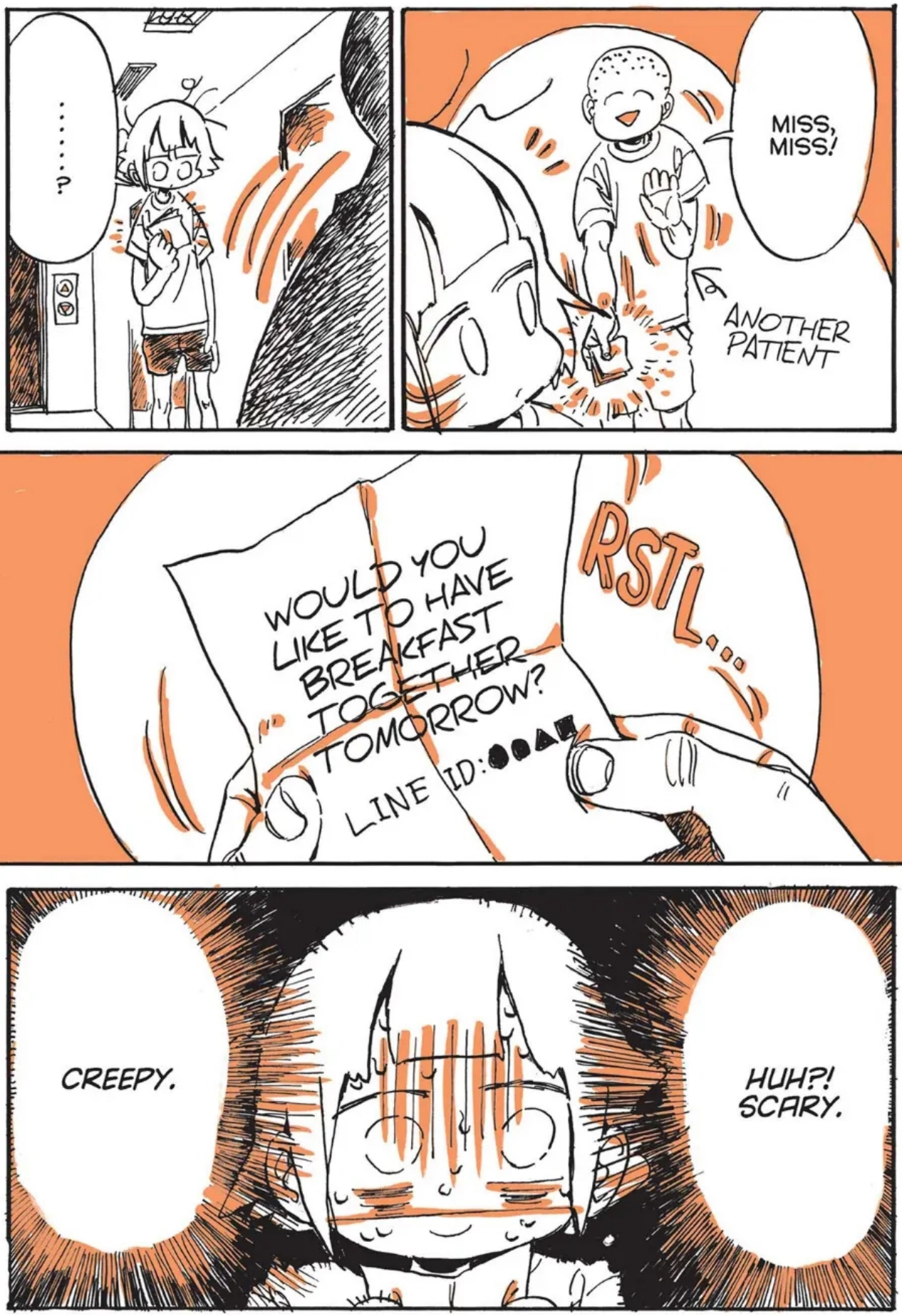
BAR AREA

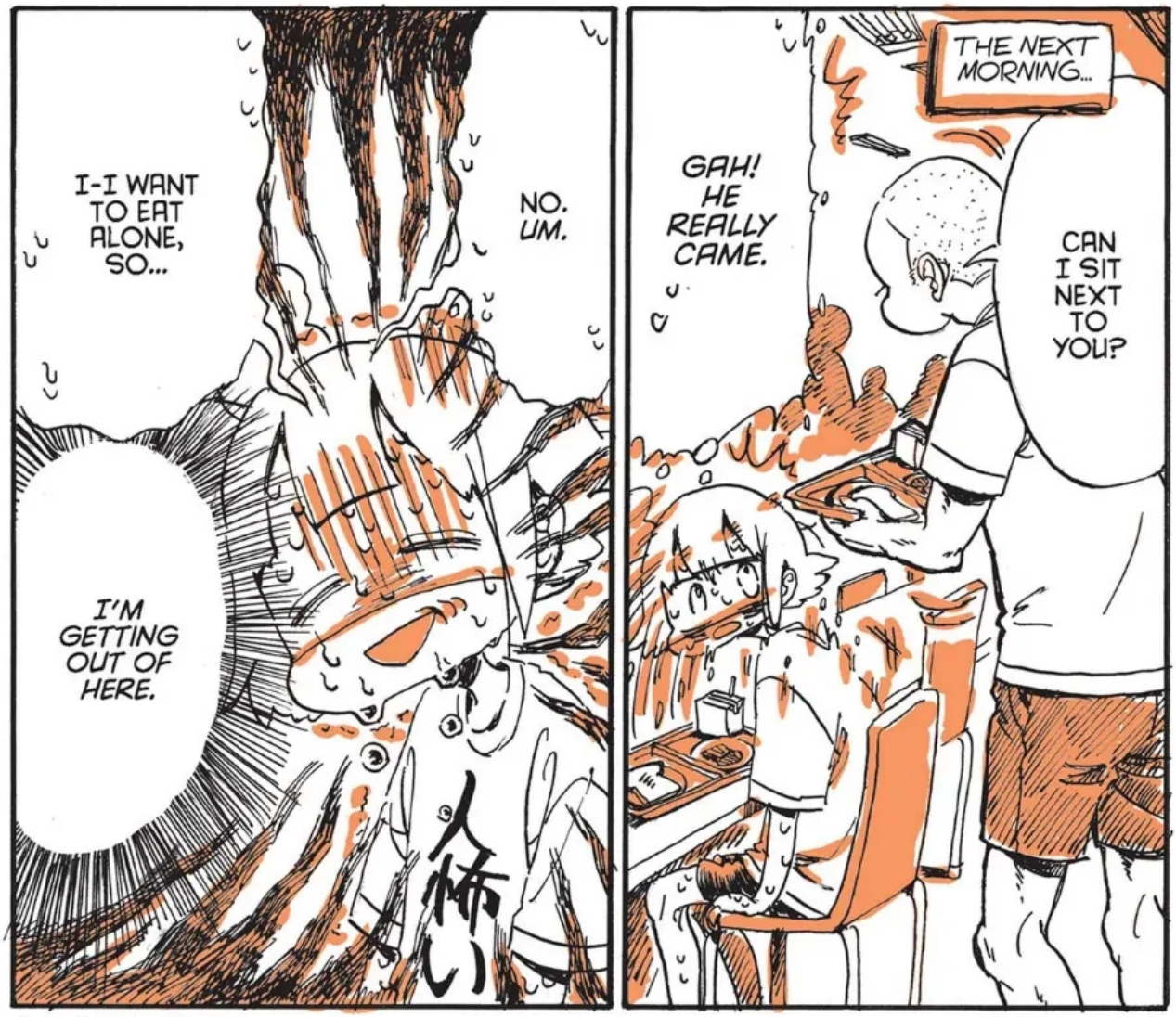
Right near the hospital was a huge supermarket, a convenience store, and even bars.

I DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE...
INSTEAD, I BOUGHT ICE CREAM AND THINGS.
ALCO-HOL
But maybe because of the change in environment, I fortunately made it through without wanting to buy alcohol.

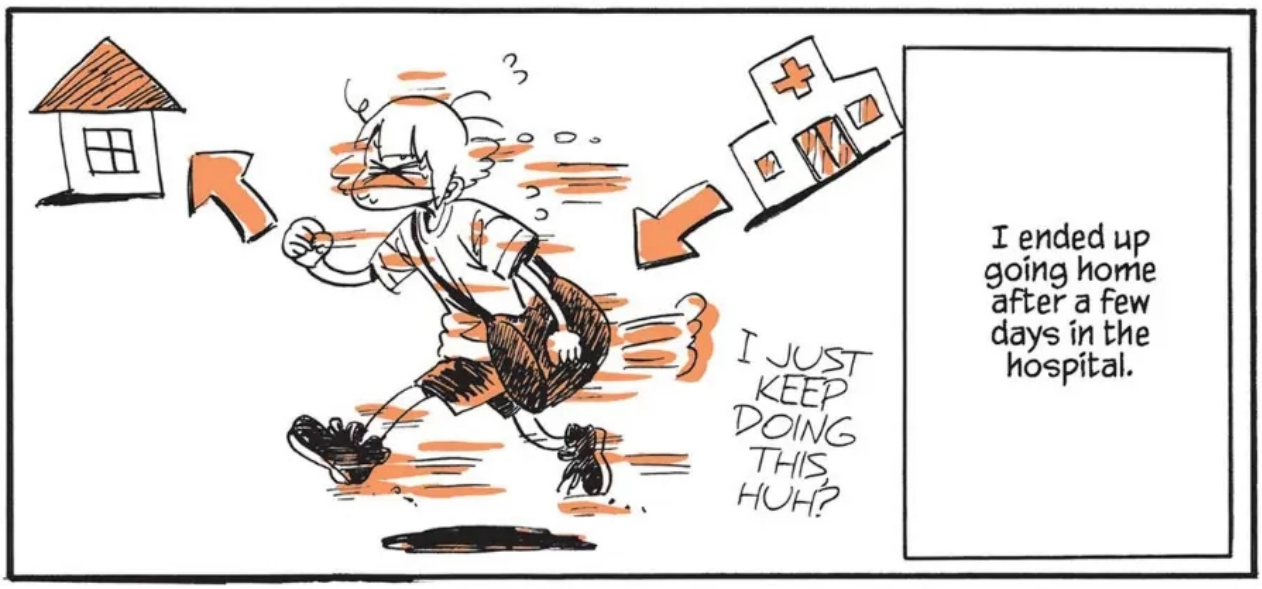

Other than that, I had all the time in the world, so I was grateful for the visits and trips out.
BOTH VERRRY INFREQUENT.
My treatment was observation and counseling.

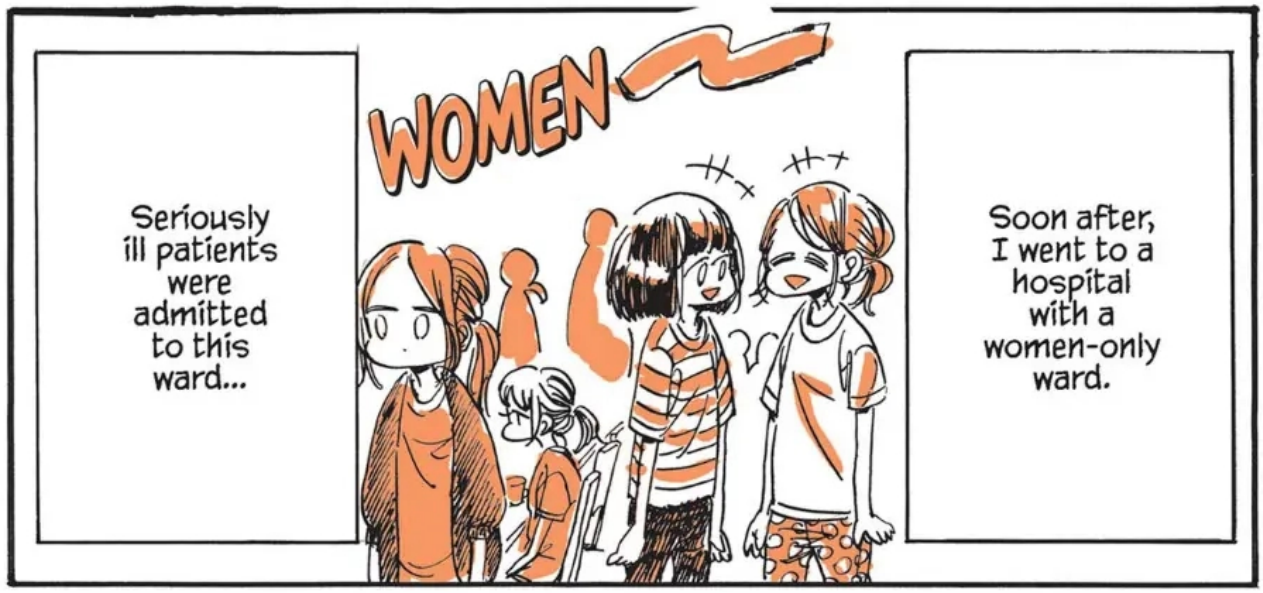
TIME FOR BED! GOTTA SLEEP!
At first, I thought I'd get through my hospital stay relatively happily, but a few days in...


.....?
MISS, MISS!
ANOTHER PATIENT
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE BREAKFAST TOGETHER TOMORROW?
LINE ID:
RSTL...
CREEPY.
HUH?! SCARY.

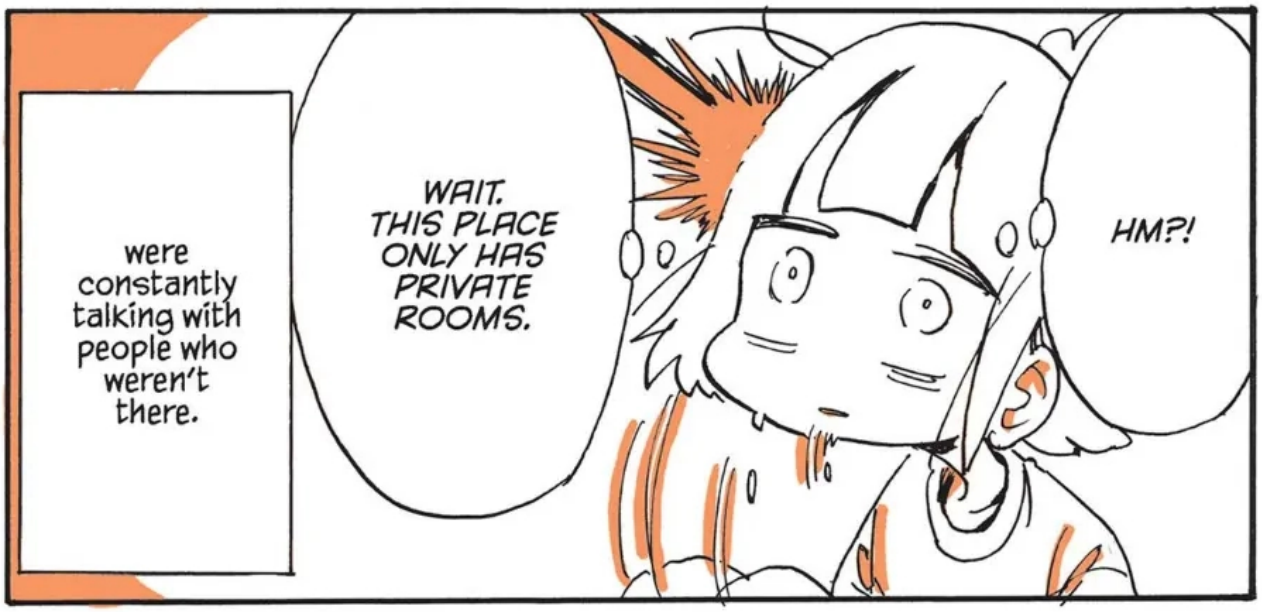



*Shirt: People = Scary*


I JUST KEEP DOING THIS, HUH?
I ended up going home after a few days in the hospital.


Seriously ill patients were admitted to this ward...
WOMEN
Soon after, I went to a hospital with a women-only ward.

THE WOMAN OVER THERE REALLY GETS ALONG WITH HER ROOMMATE, HUH?
LUCKY.
THEY FOUGHT ON THIS SIDE, THOUGH.
HONESTLY, YOU GOOF!! OO-CHAN!
and the people in the rooms on either side of mine...


were constantly talking with people who weren't there.
WAIT. THIS PLACE ONLY HAS PRIVATE ROOMS.
HM?!

With a shout...
I CAAAAN'T
WHAT
M
JOLT
In the middle of the night...

"IT MUST'VE BEEN PAINFUL," IS WHAT I THOUGHT.
SLIDING DOOR
the patient one room over kicked down their door.

Another would burst into tears and start running around.

WAAAAAAAAH!

One patient would suddenly start laughing.

HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO!

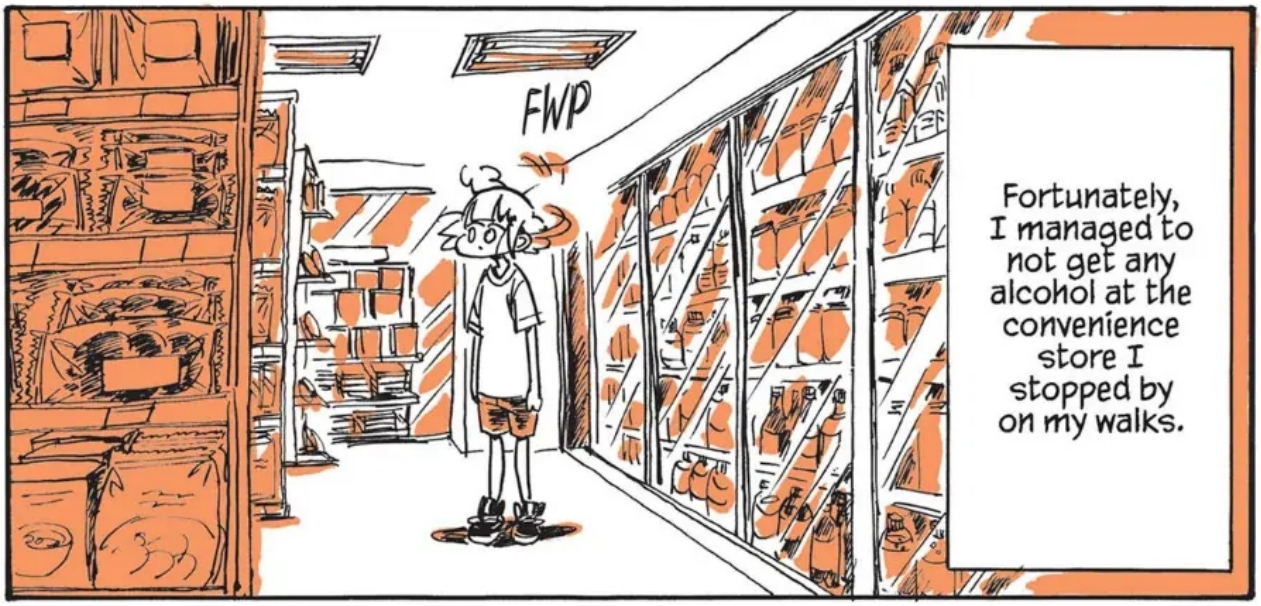
I went for a walk every day. Looking back, being able to do that really helped while I was in the hospital.

NOTHING BUT FARMS AROUND, VERY PEACEFUL!

This place had both locked (can't leave the ward) and unlocked (allowed out) patients. You had to ask for the double doors to be opened to go outside.

LOCKED PERSON

HAVE FUN!


FWP
Fortunately, I managed to not get any alcohol at the convenience store I stopped by on my walks.

YOU COULD ALSO DO KARAOKE.
FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, I COLORED AND STUFF.
My treatment was observation and occupational therapy.

As to why that ended after a month...
NO
I was there for ten days, so I managed to basically achieve the goal of staying away from alcohol. I also succeeded in not drinking for a month after I was discharged.

my love for my parents seemed to intensify when I was in the hospital...

LET'S GO ON A TRIP, JUST THE THREE OF US!!

DAD

MOM

so I planned and executed a family trip.

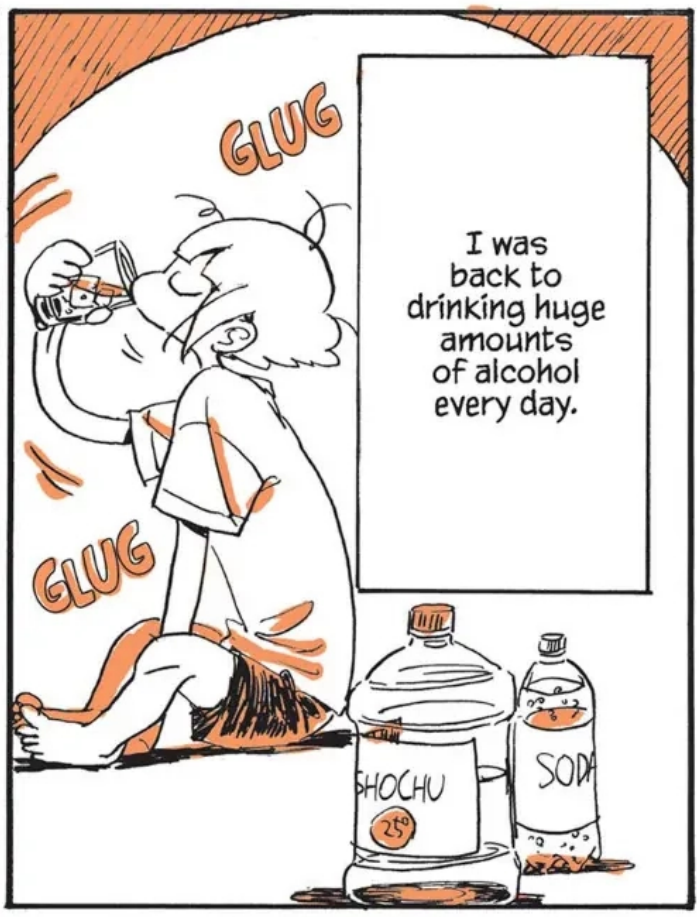
I drank so much at dinner there that I had a hangover the next day. After that, I started drinking again and ended up right back where I started.

I EVEN HAD THE NERVE TO BOOK AN ALL-YOU-CAN-DRINK PLAN...

My Pancreas Broke
But My Life
Got Better

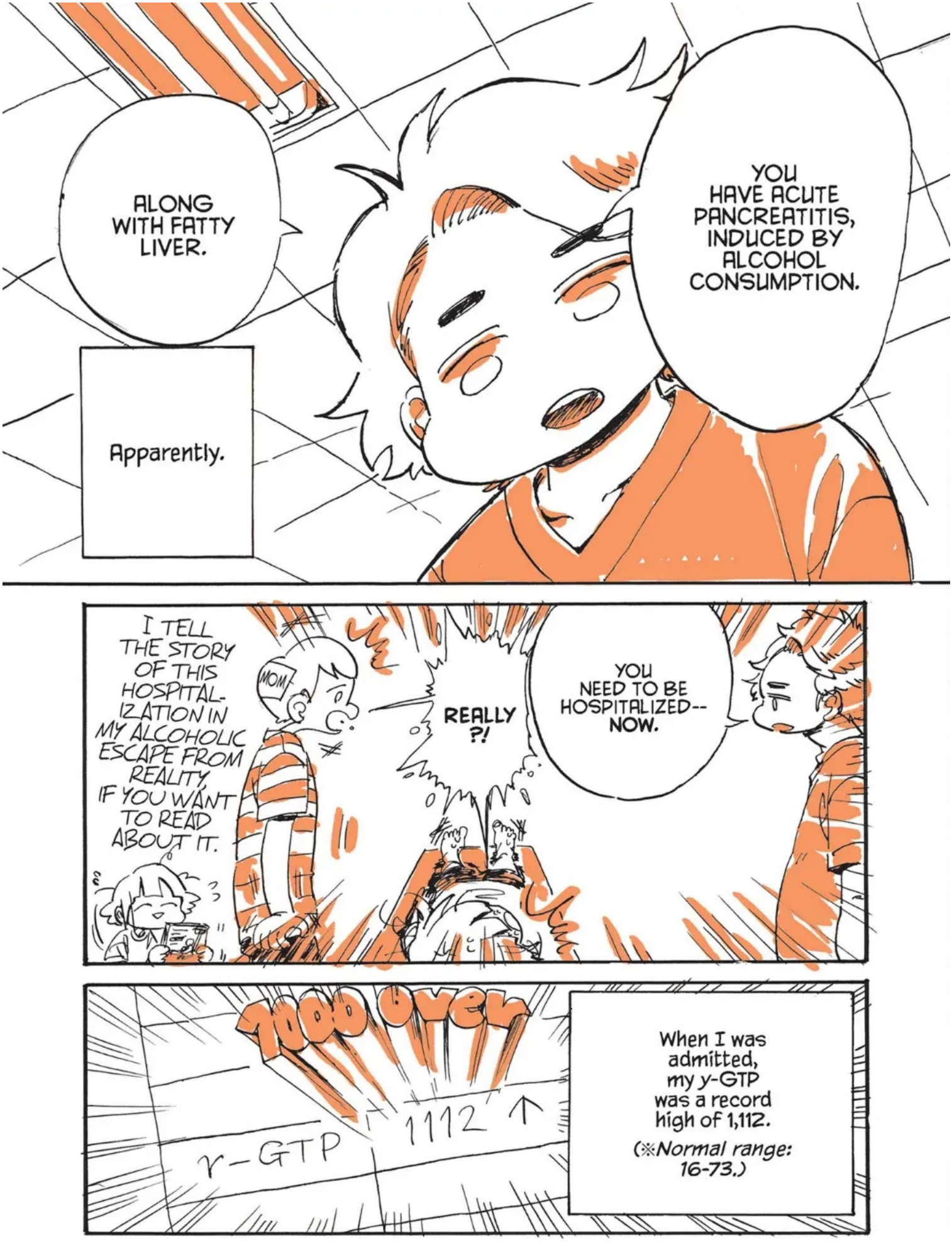
On October 7, 2018...

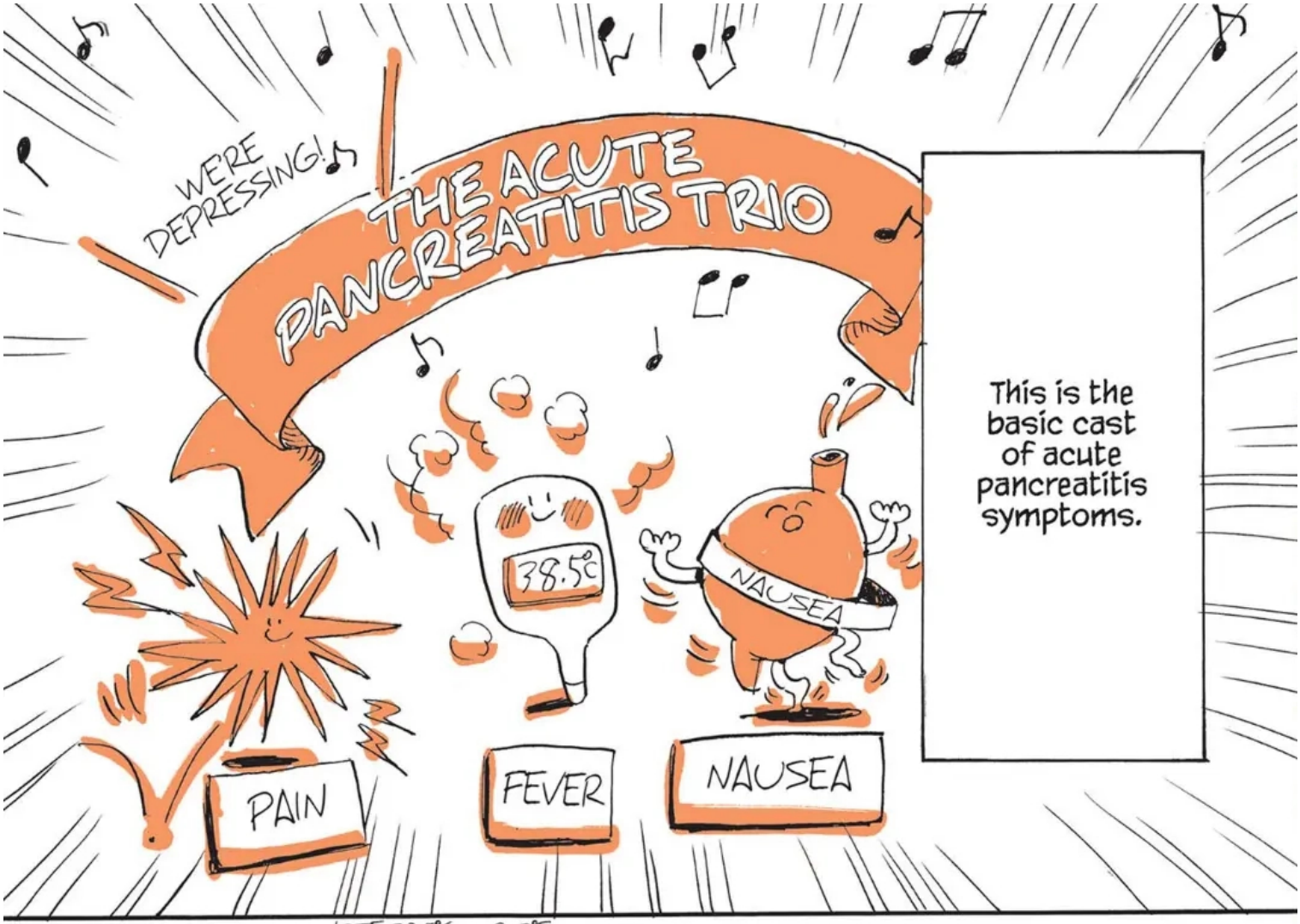
## CHAPTER 3



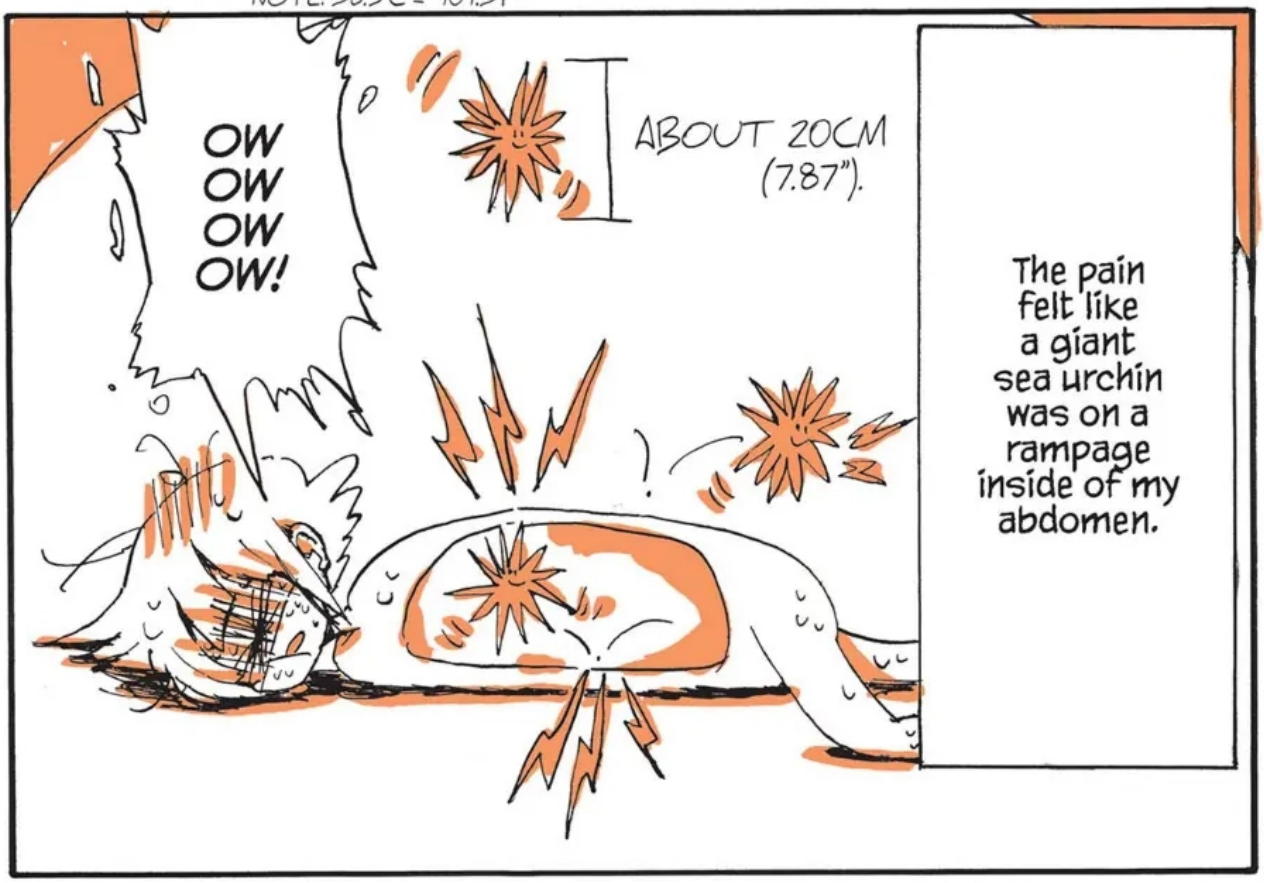

Eventually, it became too much to bear, and I went to the hospital.

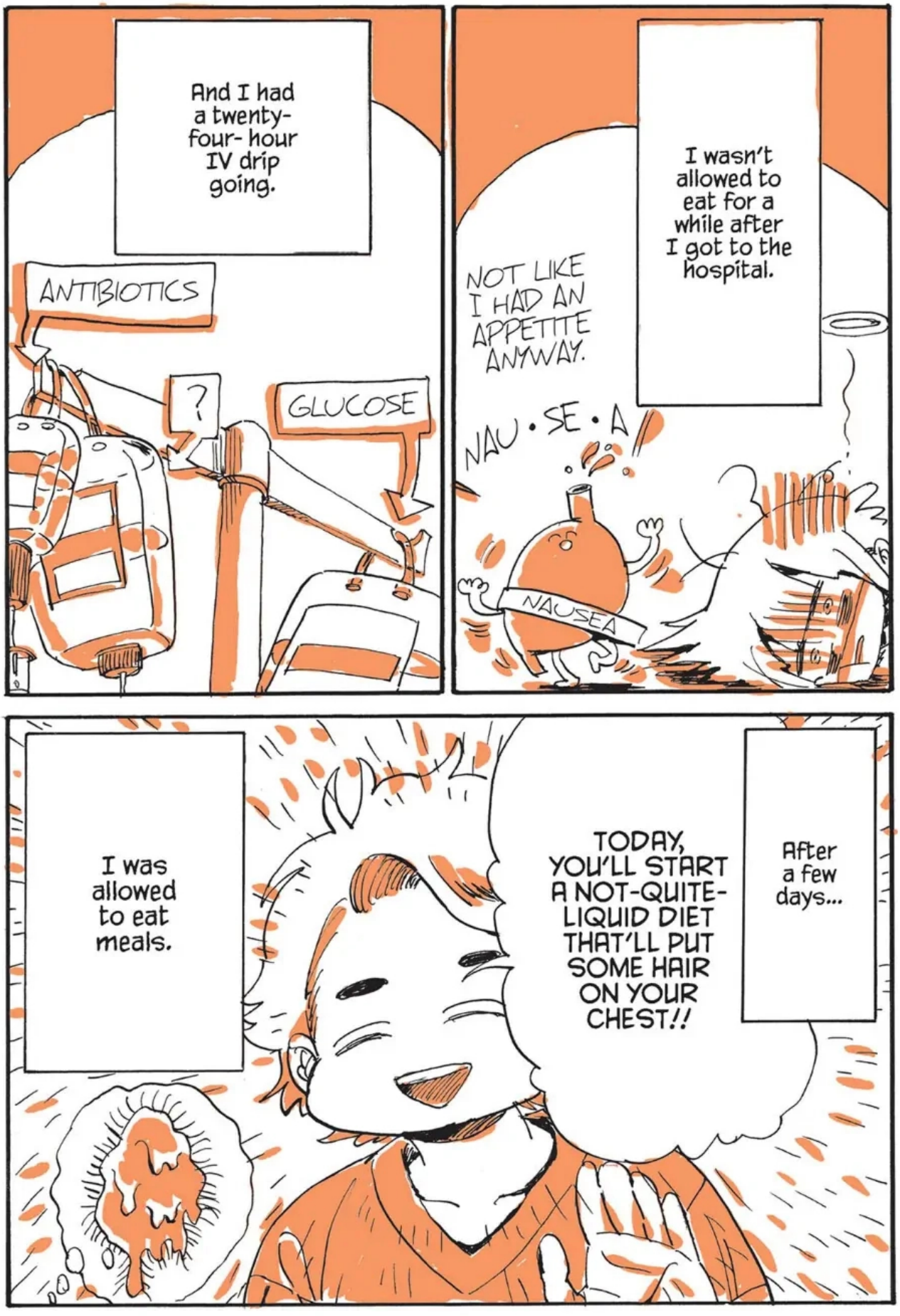
I was hit with this horrible stomachache. Painkillers didn't work, and it grew more and more agonizing.

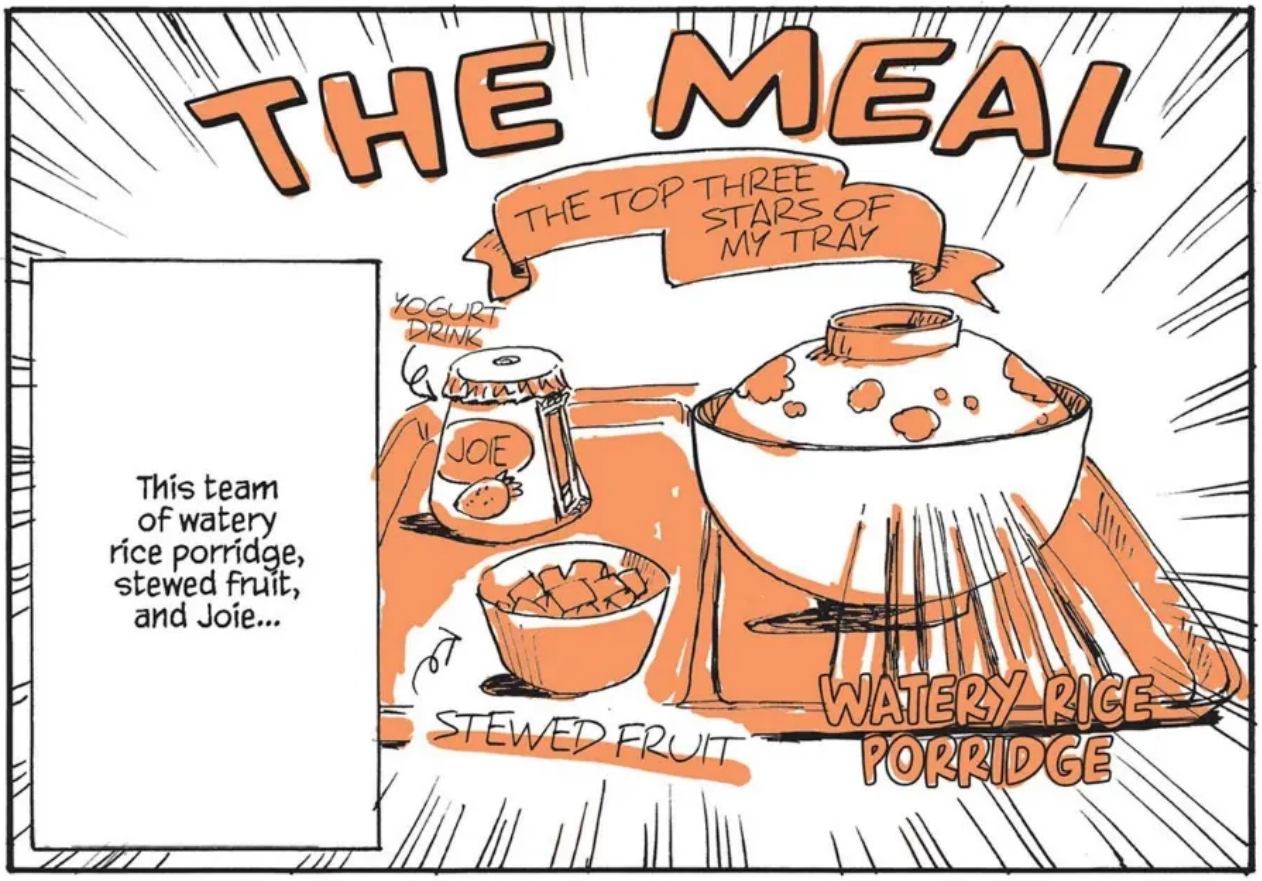

YOU HAVE ACUTE PANCREATITIS, INDUCED BY ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION.
ALONG WITH FATTY LIVER.
Apparently.
YOU NEED TO BE HOSPITALIZED-- NOW.
REALLY ?!
MOM
I TELL THE STORY OF THIS HOSPITAL-IZATION IN MY ALCOHOLIC ESCAPE FROM REALITY, IF YOU WANT TO READ ABOUT IT.
TOO OVER
γ-GTP
1112 ↑
When I was admitted, my γ-GTP was a record high of 1,112.
(※Normal range: 16-73.)

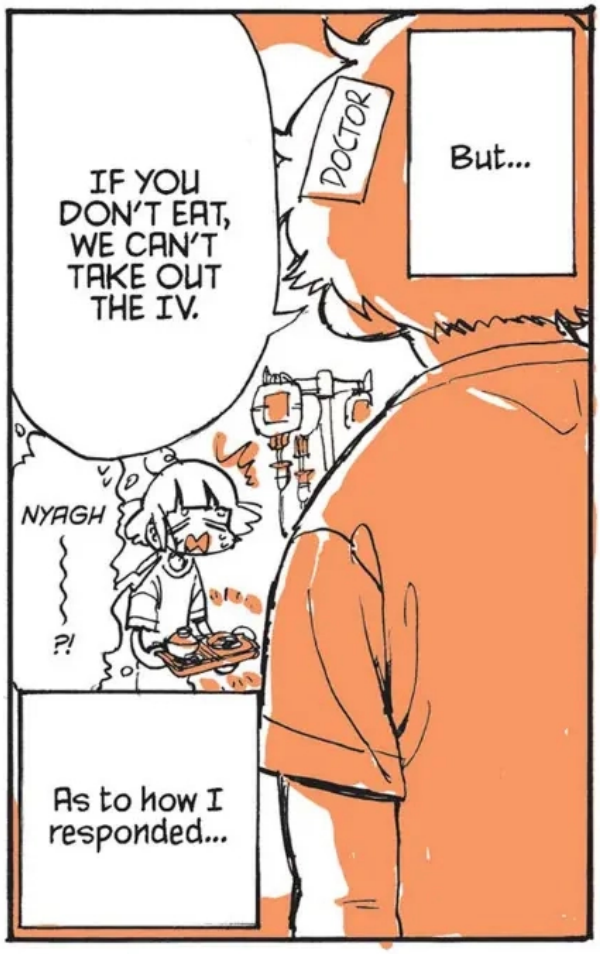


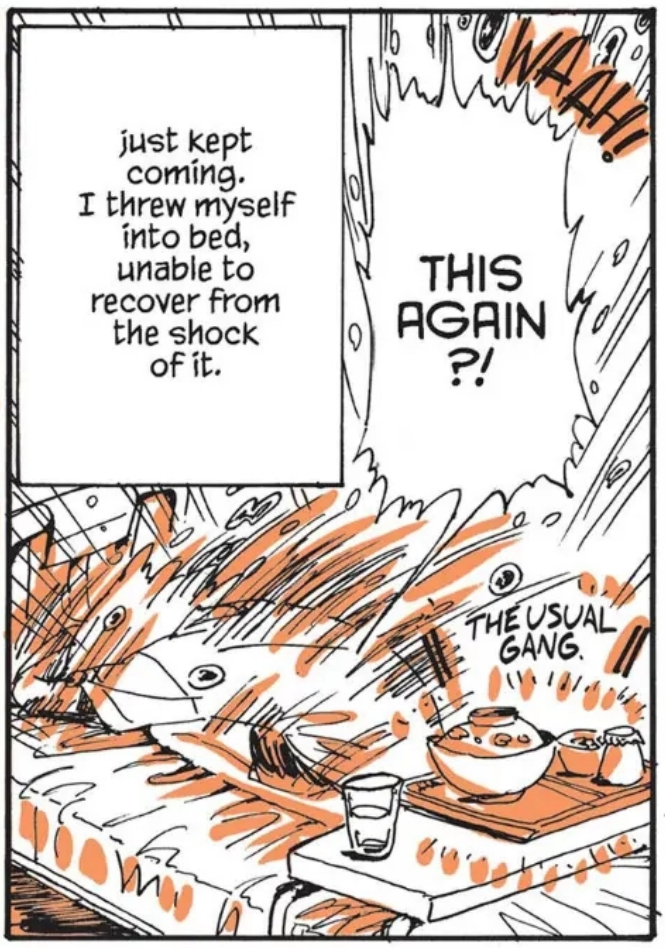

NOTE: 38.5°C = 101.3°F

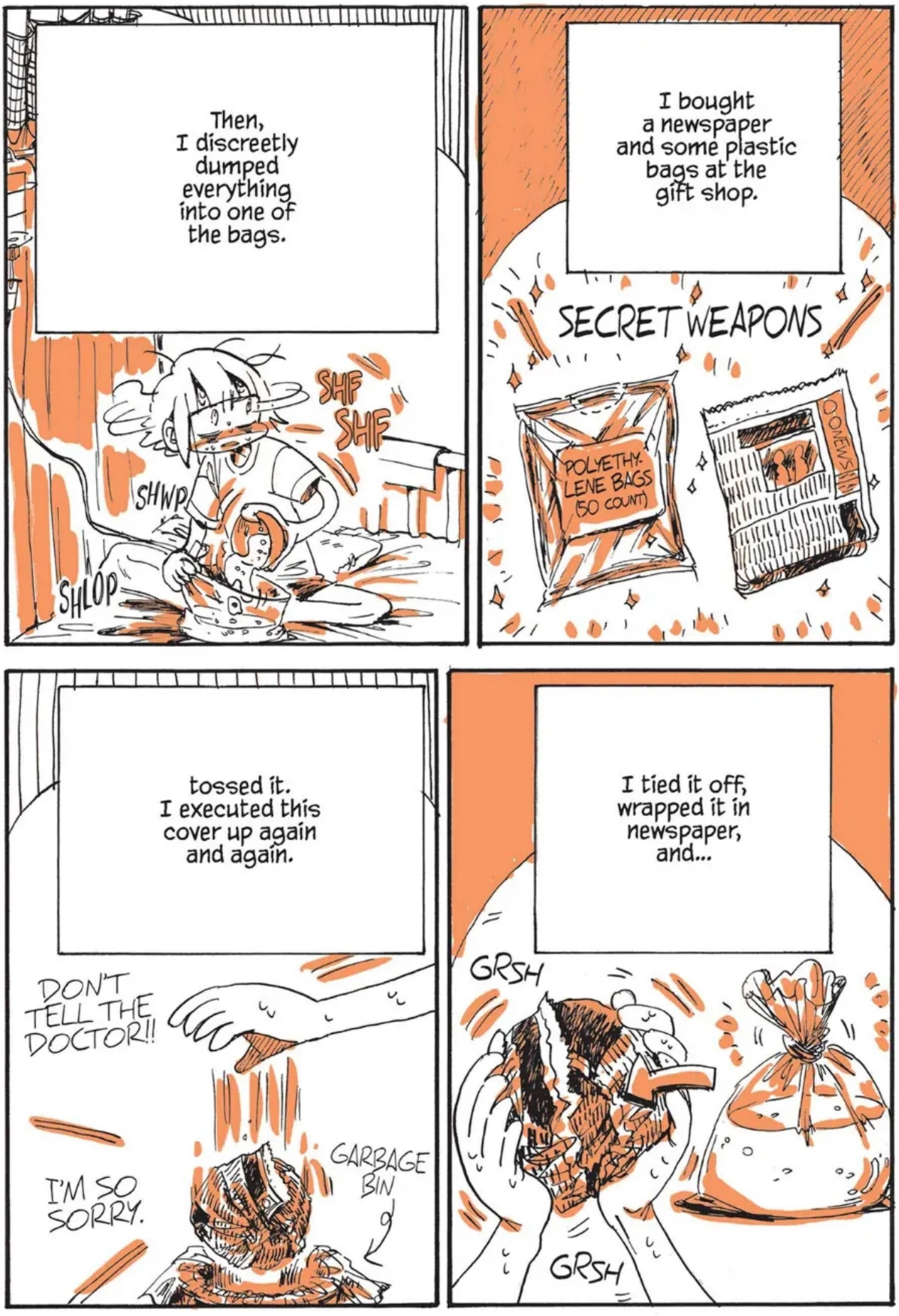


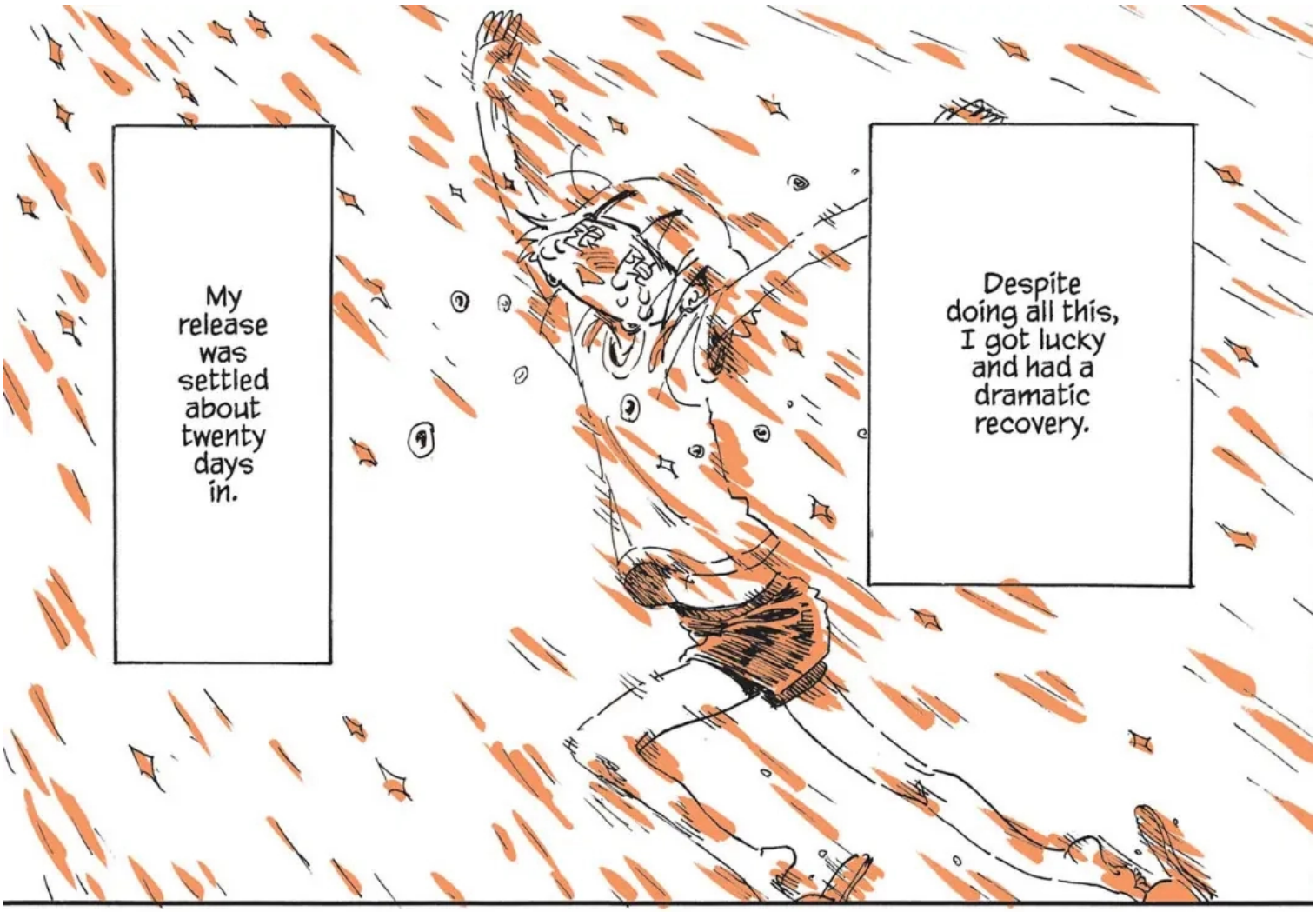

And I had a twenty-four- hour IV drip going.
ANTIBIOTICS
?
GLUCOSE
I wasn't allowed to eat for a while after I got to the hospital.
NOT LIKE I HAD AN APPETITE ANYWAY.
NAU • SE • A
NAUSEA
After a few days...
TODAY, YOU'LL START A NOT-QUITE-LIQUID DIET THAT'LL PUT SOME HAIR ON YOUR CHEST!!
I was allowed to eat meals.


THE MEAL
THE TOP THREE STARS OF MY TRAY
YOGURT DRINK
JOIE
STEWED FRUIT
WATERY RICE PORRIDGE
This team of watery rice porridge, stewed fruit, and Joie...

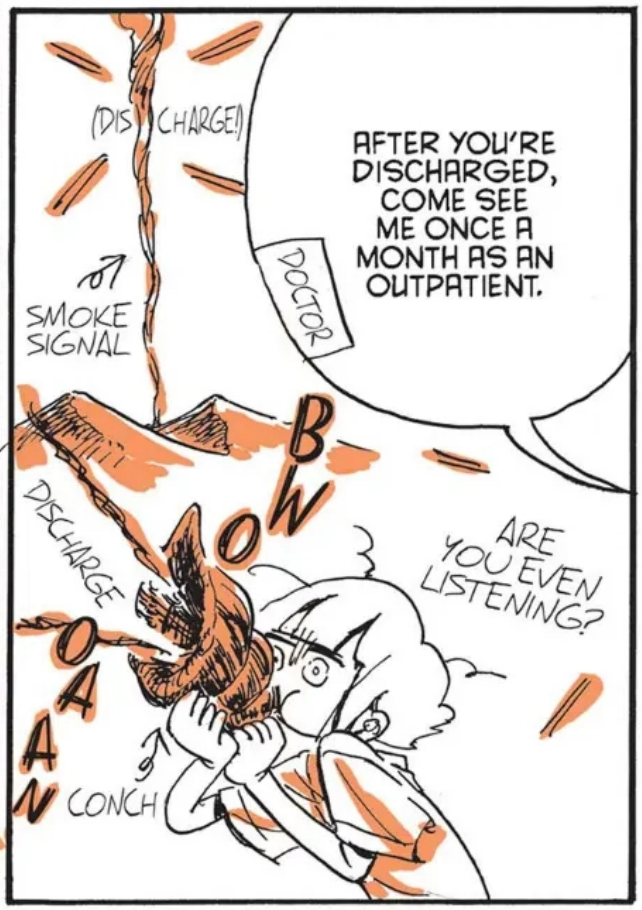

DOCTOR
But...
IF YOU DON'T EAT, WE CAN'T TAKE OUT THE IV.
NYAGH
?!
As to how I responded...


WAAH!!
THIS AGAIN ?!
THE USUAL GANG.
just kept coming. I threw myself into bed, unable to recover from the shock of it.

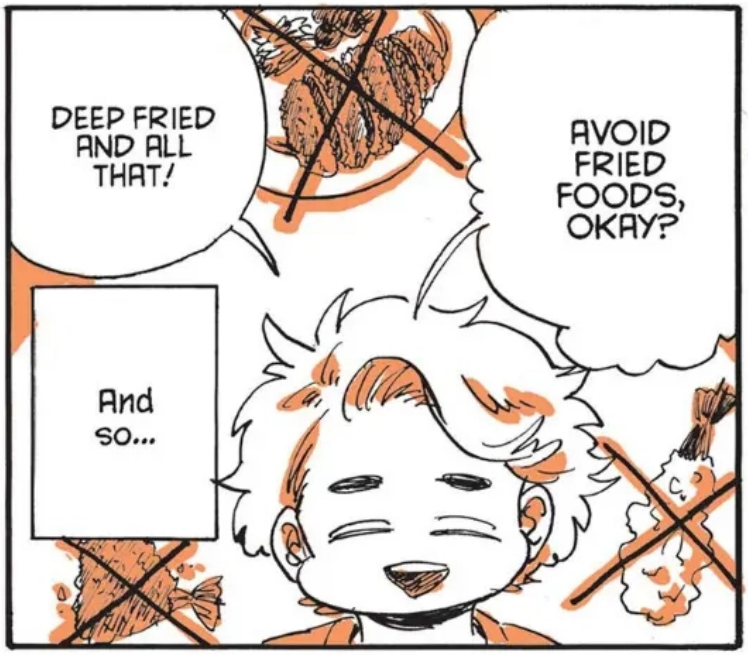

Then, I discreetly dumped everything into one of the bags.
SHF SHF
SHWP
SHLOP
I bought a newspaper and some plastic bags at the gift shop.
SECRET WEAPONS
POLYETHY-LENE BAGS (50 COUNT)
NEWS
tossed it. I executed this cover up again and again.
DON'T TELL THE DOCTOR!!
I'M SO SORRY.
GARBAGE BIN
I tied it off, wrapped it in newspaper, and...
GRSH
GRSH


My release was settled about twenty days in.
Despite doing all this, I got lucky and had a dramatic recovery.

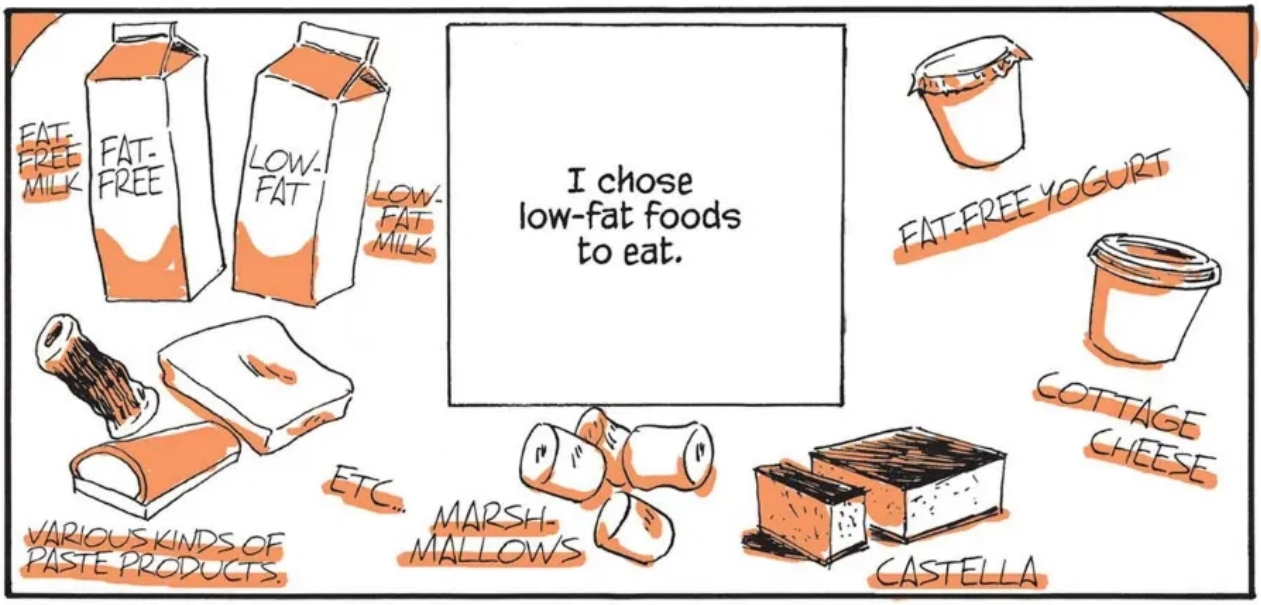
AND ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOL!!


(DIS CHARGE!)
SMOKE SIGNAL
DOCTOR
AFTER YOU'RE DISCHARGED, COME SEE ME ONCE A MONTH AS AN OUTPATIENT.
DISCHARGE
CONCH
ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING?

but on the day of my discharge, it was already fall. That made me sad.
I arrived at the hospital in short sleeves...

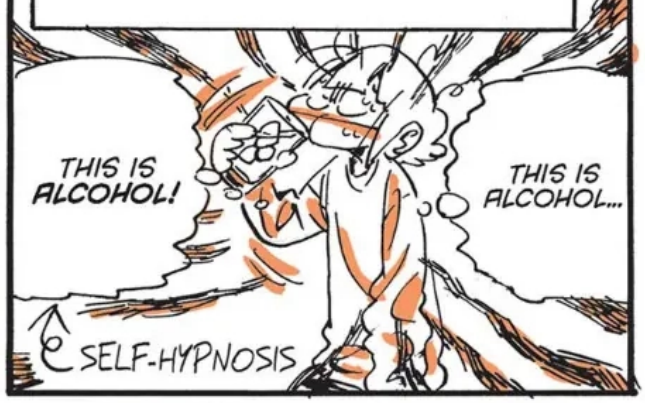

DEEP FRIED AND ALL THAT!
AVOID FRIED FOODS, OKAY?
And so...

After my release, it was abstinence, and...
NO!! ALCO-HOL!
NO!!
NO! ABSO-LUTELY NOT!
PANCREAS

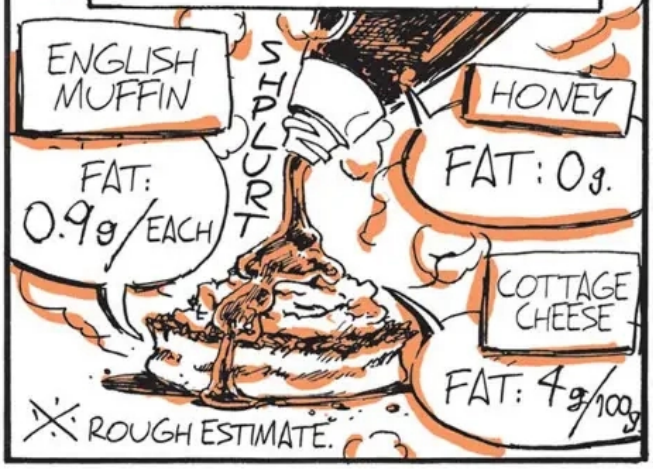

FAT-FREE MILK
FAT-FREE
LOW-FAT
LOW-FAT MILK
I chose low-fat foods to eat.
FAT-FREE YOGURT
COTTAGE CHEESE
VARIOUS KINDS OF PASTE PRODUCTS.
ETC...
MARSH-MALLOWS
CASTELLA

When I had the low-fat paste products (not the fried ones) with non-alcoholic beer, it really felt like I was drinking.

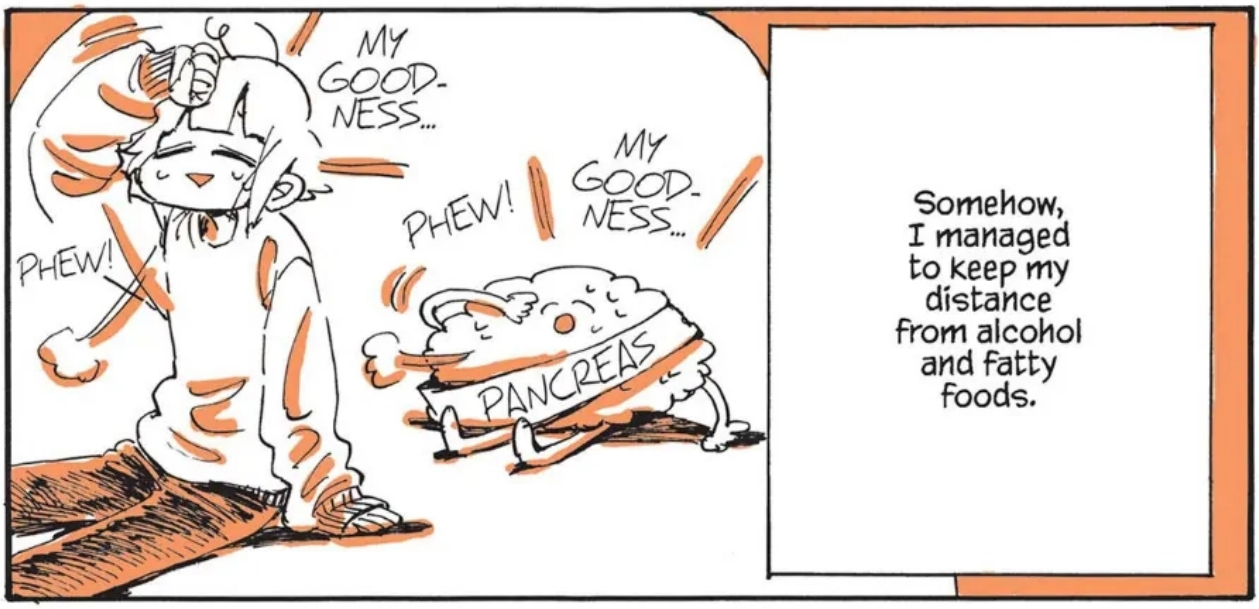
As an alcohol substitute, I had ice with the Calpis I used to mix with alcohol, and non-alcoholic beer.

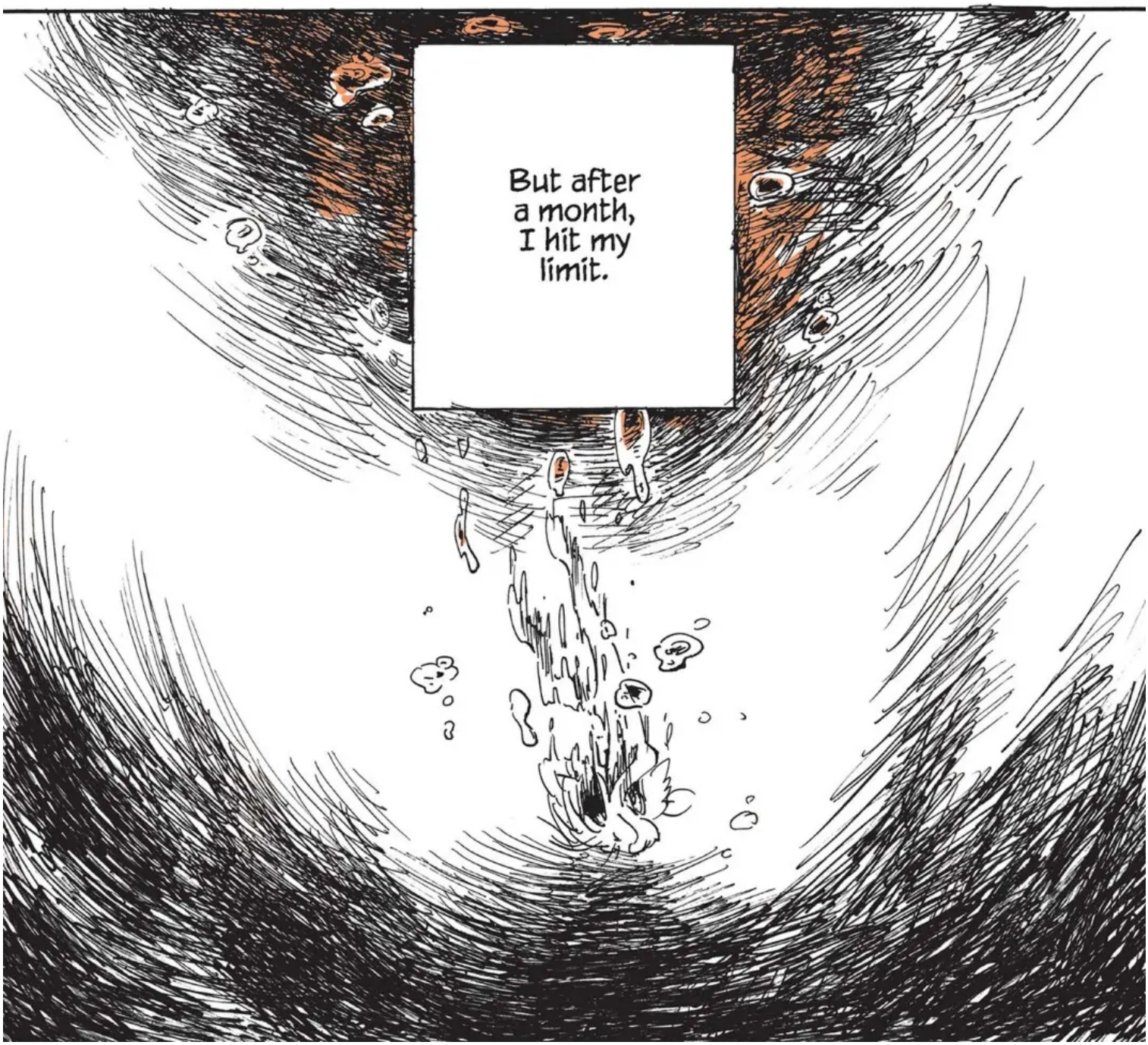



A toasted English muffin with cottage cheese and honey was also delicious.




For low-fat sweets, I had castella with nonfat milk.

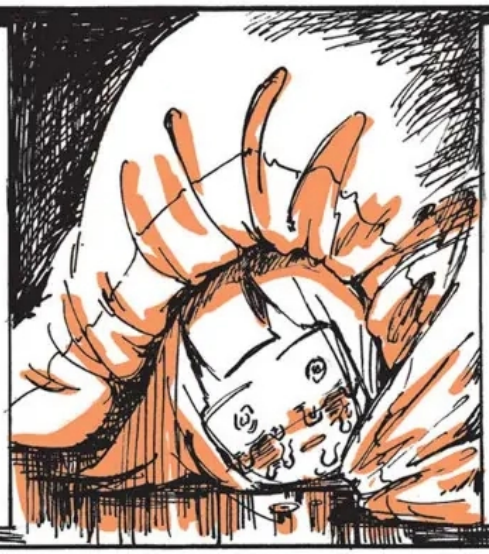

MY GOOD-NESS...
PHEW!
MY GOOD-NESS...
PHEW!
PANCREAS
Somehow, I managed to keep my distance from alcohol and fatty foods.


But after a month, I hit my limit.

I buried myself in blankets and screamed and cried and desperately tried to hold out.

I wanted a drink so badly I could hardly stand it.

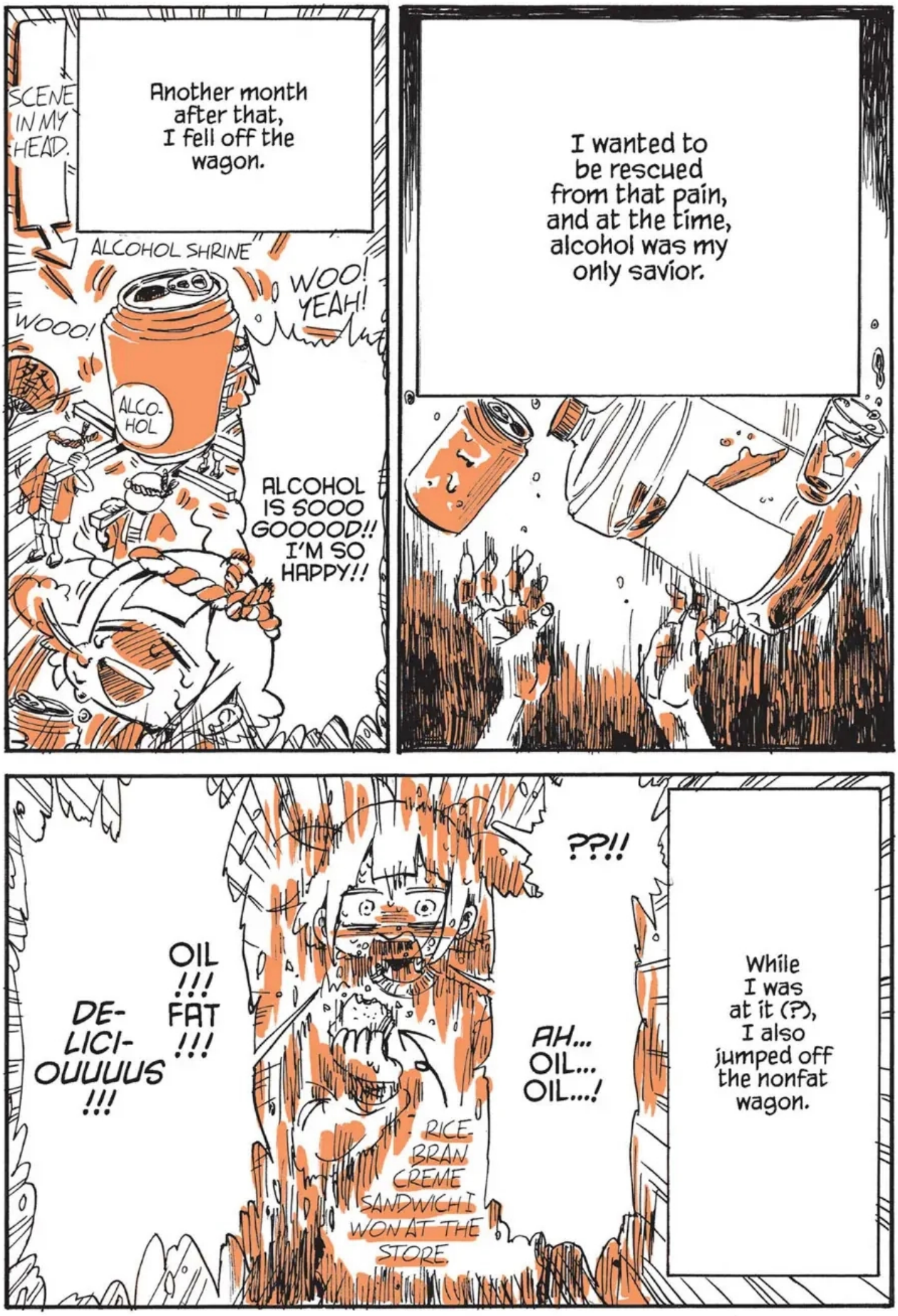
because I wanted to be freed from guilt, and I wanted to draw fiction, but it wasn't going well.

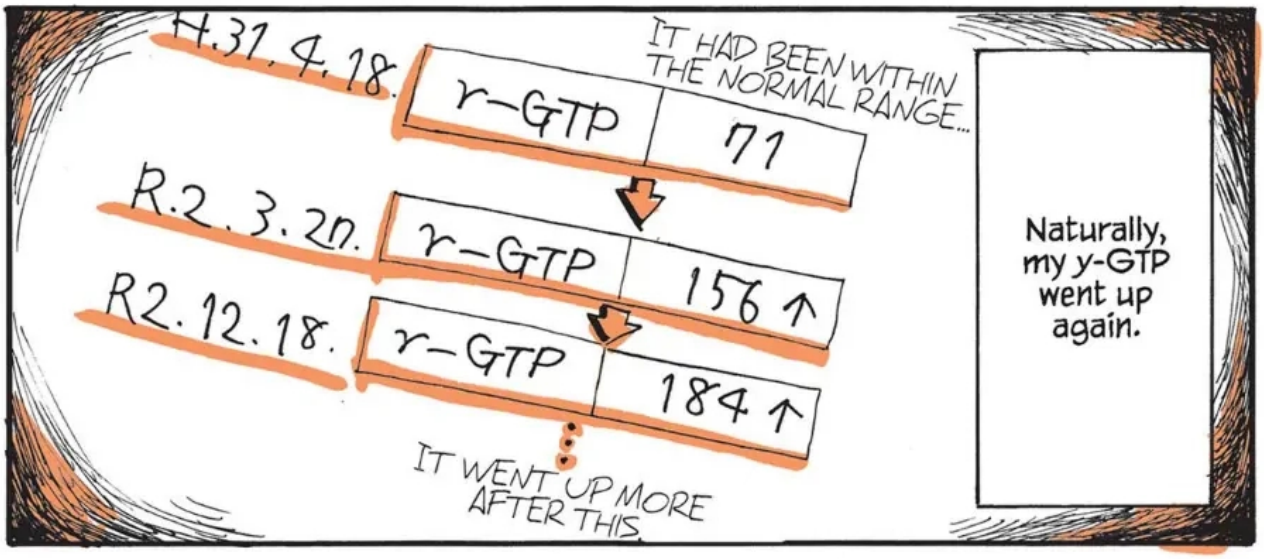


The main reasons I wanted a drink so badly were, of course...

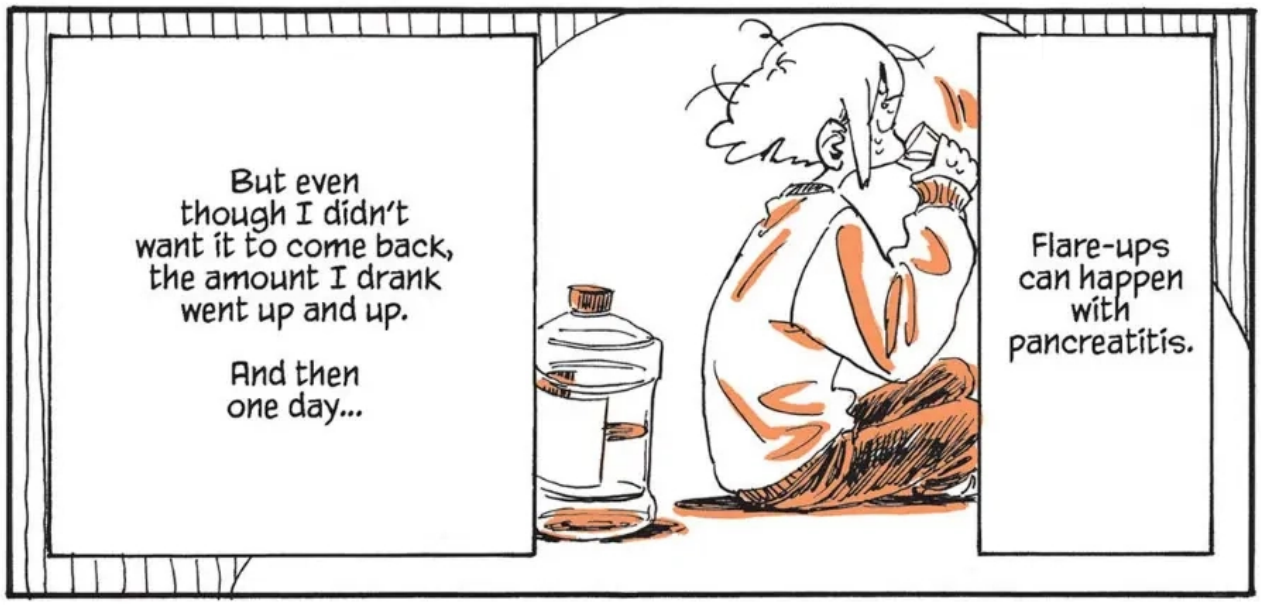
On top of that was the guilt I felt about my desire to write fiction being driven by the fact that I made my parents cry.

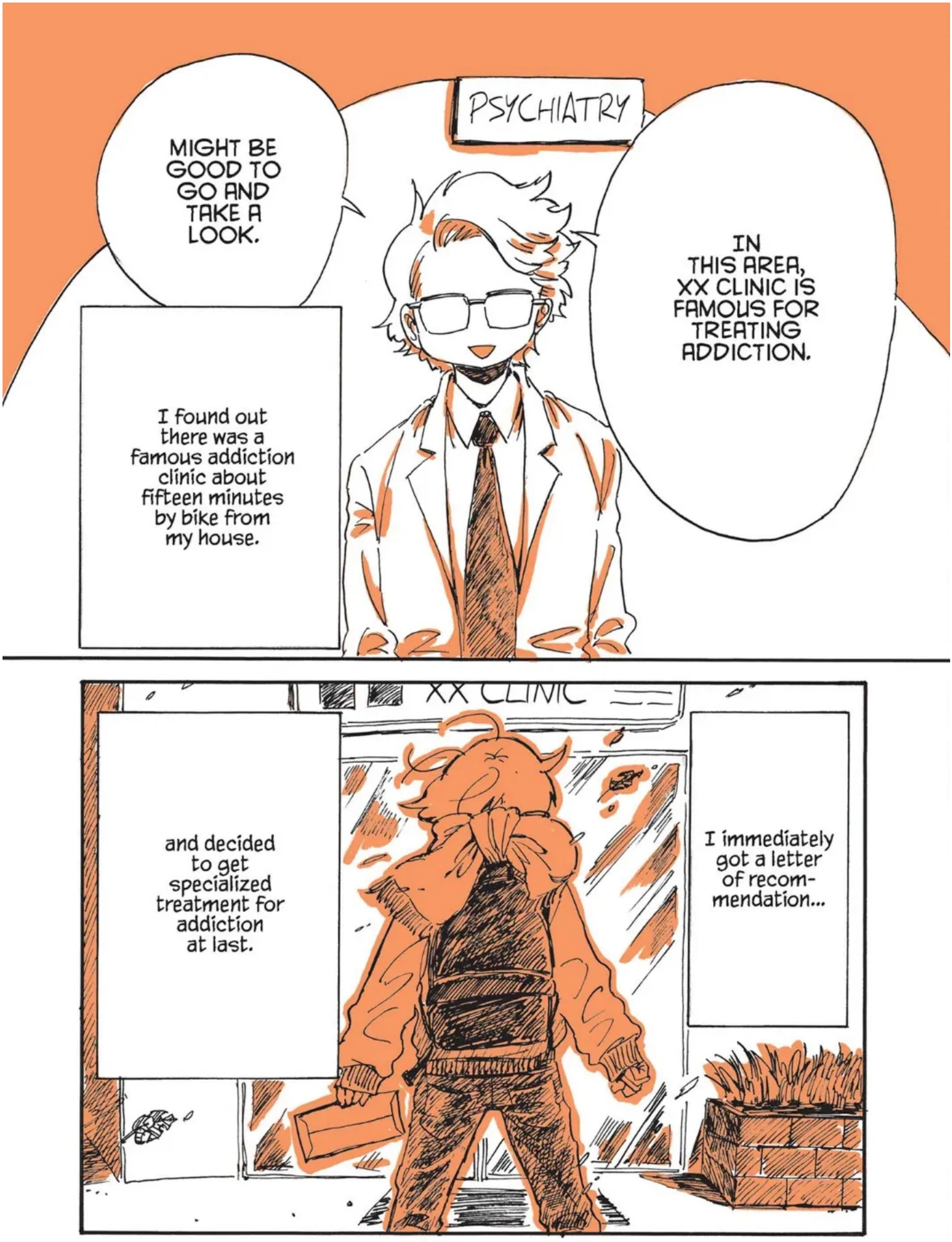
I didn't want to make my parents cry with my autobio manga anymore, so I'd been working on fiction while I was in the hospital and after my release. But it was going absolutely nowhere.


SCENE IN MY HEAD.
Another month after that, I fell off the wagon.
ALCOHOL SHRINE
WOO! YEAH!
WOOO!
ALCO-HOL
ALCOHOL IS SOOO GOOOOD!! I'M SO HAPPY!!
I wanted to be rescued from that pain, and at the time, alcohol was my only savior.
??!!
OIL !!! FAT !!!
DE-LICI-OUUUUS !!!
AH... OIL... OIL...!
RICE BRAN CREME SANDWICH I WON AT THE STORE.
While I was at it (?), I also jumped off the nonfat wagon.

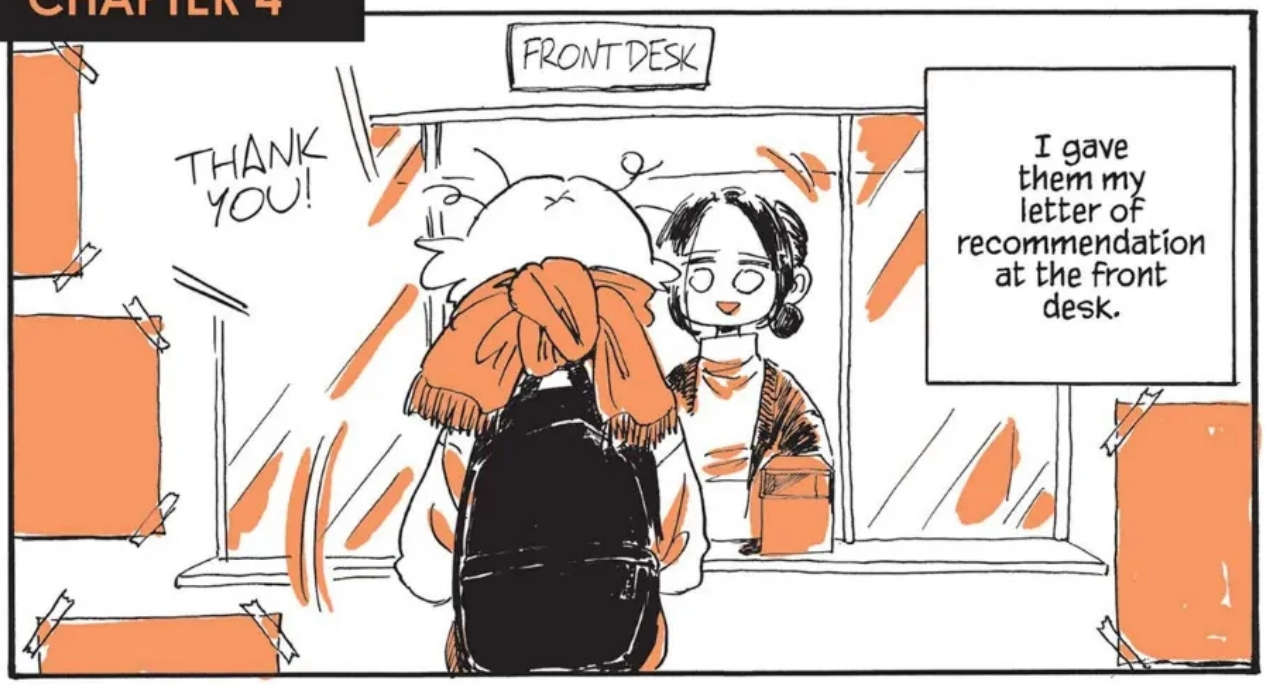

H.31.4.18.
γ-GTP
77
IT HAD BEEN WITHIN THE NORMAL RANGE...
R.2.3.20.
γ-GTP
156↑
R2.12.18.
γ-GTP
184↑
IT WENT UP MORE AFTER THIS.
Naturally, my γ-GTP went up again.

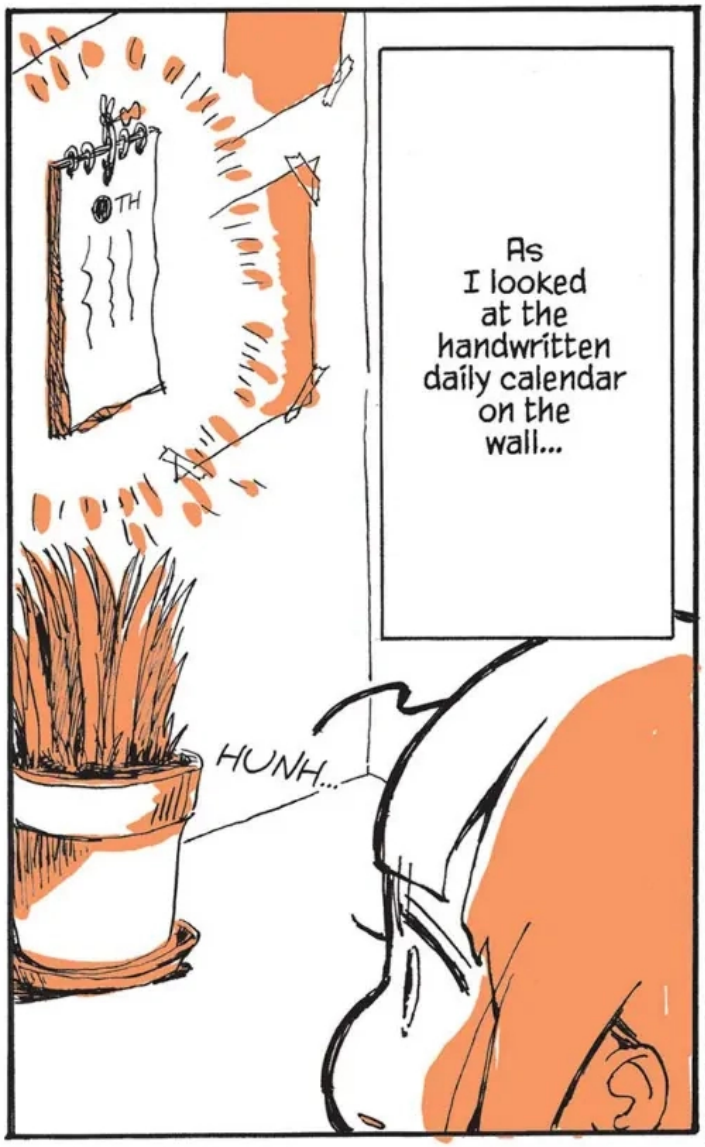
but it didn't take too long before I was back to a liter of shochu a day.
I'D CAREFULLY MEASURE OUT THE AMOUNTS SO THAT I COULD SEE THEM--THINGS LIKE THAT.
0/△(MON)
TODAY'S DRINK
800ml.
0/0 (TUES)
TODAY'S DRINK
980ml
Even still, I couldn't quit drinking. I tried all kinds of things to at least drink less...

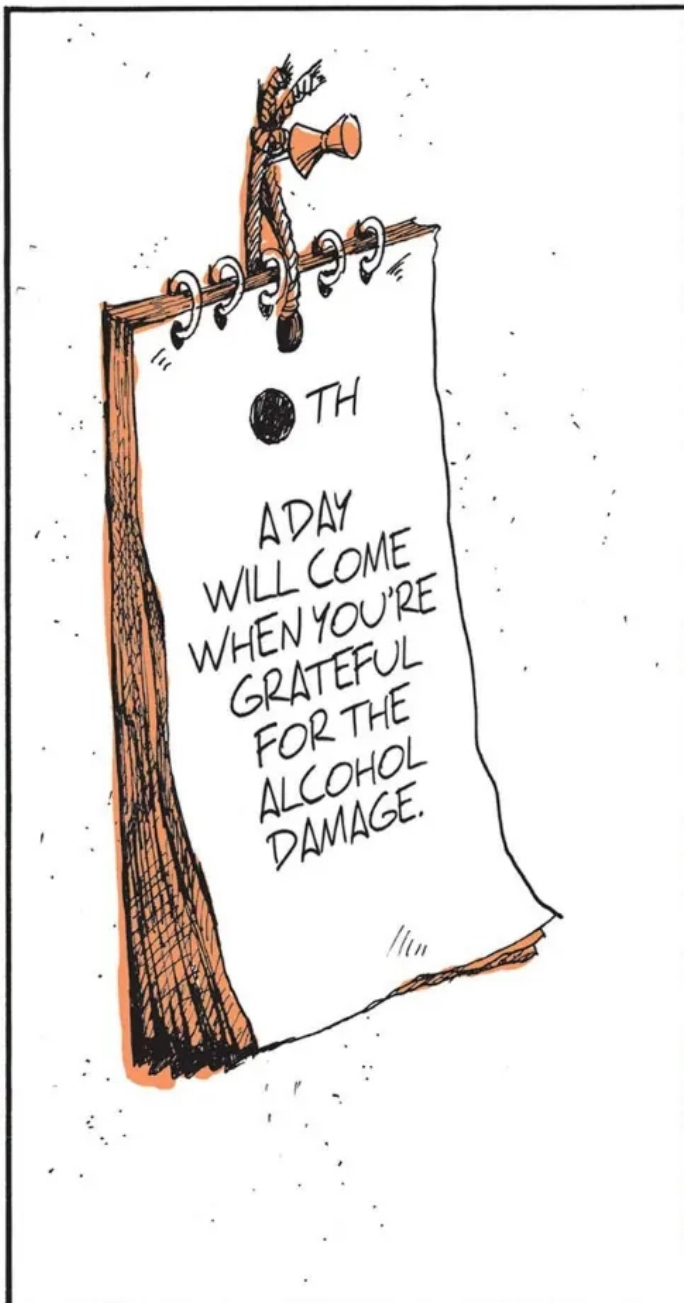

But even though I didn't want it to come back, the amount I drank went up and up.
And then one day...
Flare-ups can happen with pancreatitis.

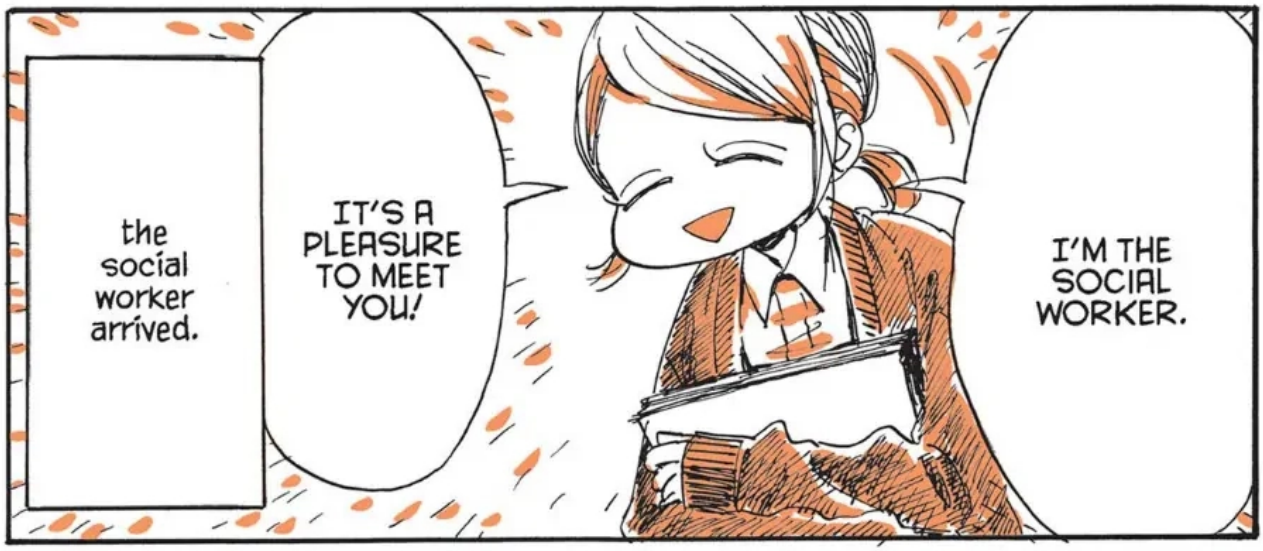

PSYCHIATRY
MIGHT BE GOOD TO GO AND TAKE A LOOK.
IN THIS AREA, XX CLINIC IS FAMOUS FOR TREATING ADDICTION.
I found out there was a famous addiction clinic about fifteen minutes by bike from my house.
XX CLINIC
and decided to get specialized treatment for addiction at last.
I immediately got a letter of recommendation...

# CHAPTER 4


FRONT DESK
THANK YOU!
I gave them my letter of recommendation at the front desk.


TH
As I looked at the handwritten daily calendar on the wall...
HUNH...


TH
A DAY WILL COME WHEN YOU'RE GRATEFUL FOR THE ALCOHOL DAMAGE.

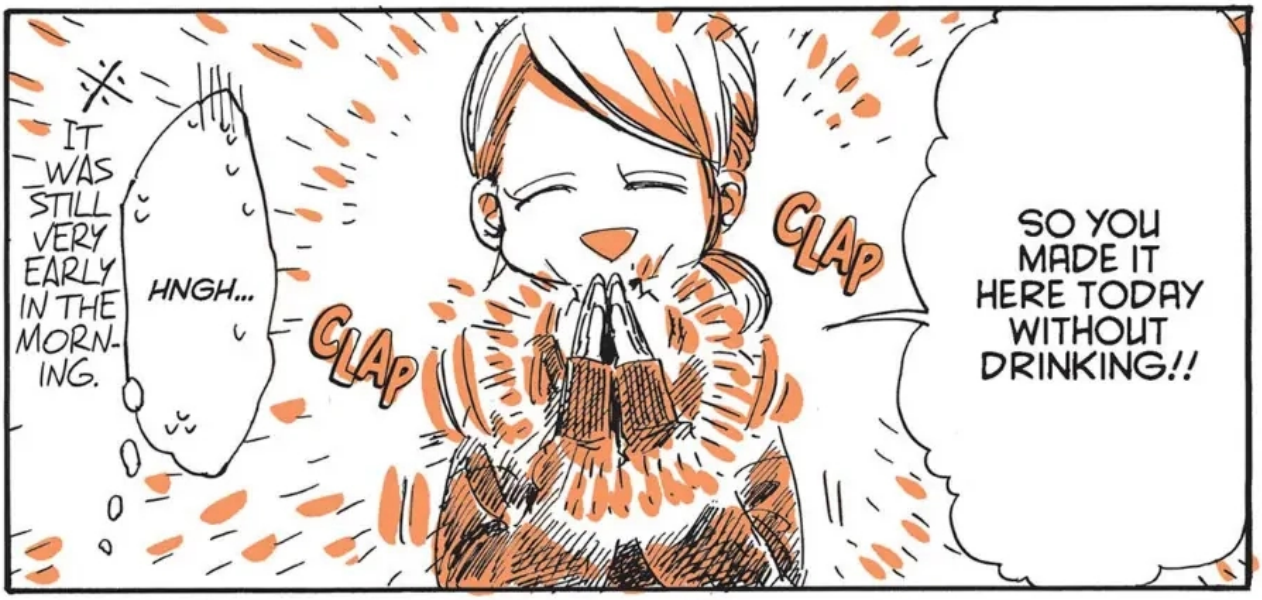

the social worker arrived.
IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU!
I'M THE SOCIAL WORKER.

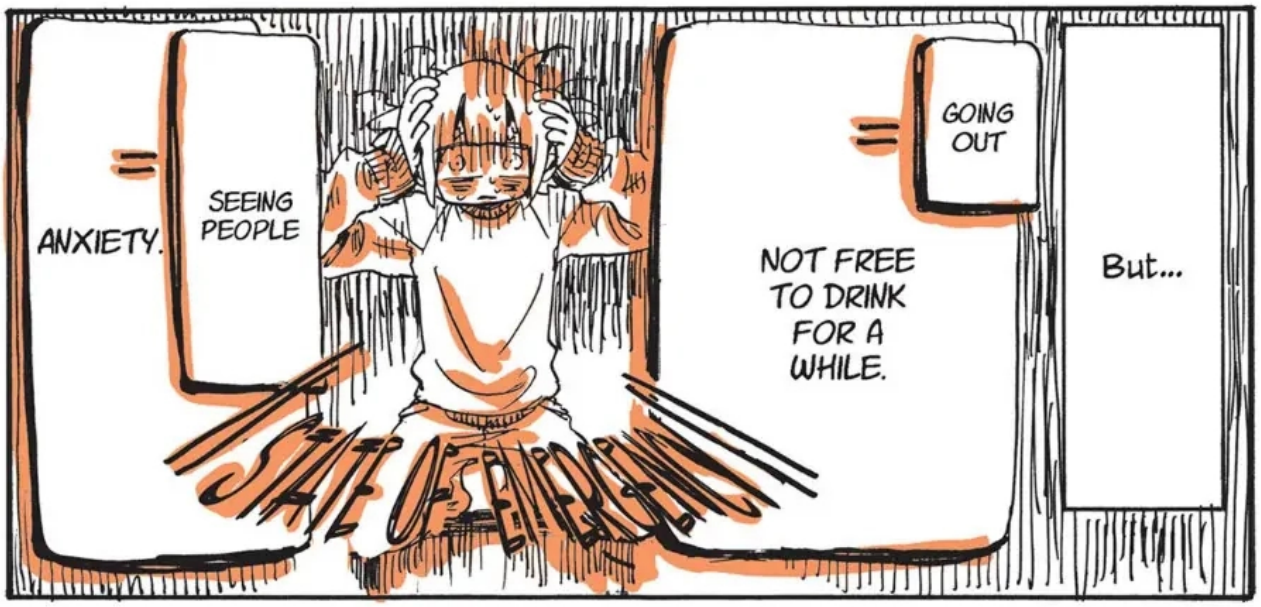
and they would run alongside you toward total abstinence.
ABSTINENCE
The setup there was that each patient had their own social worker...

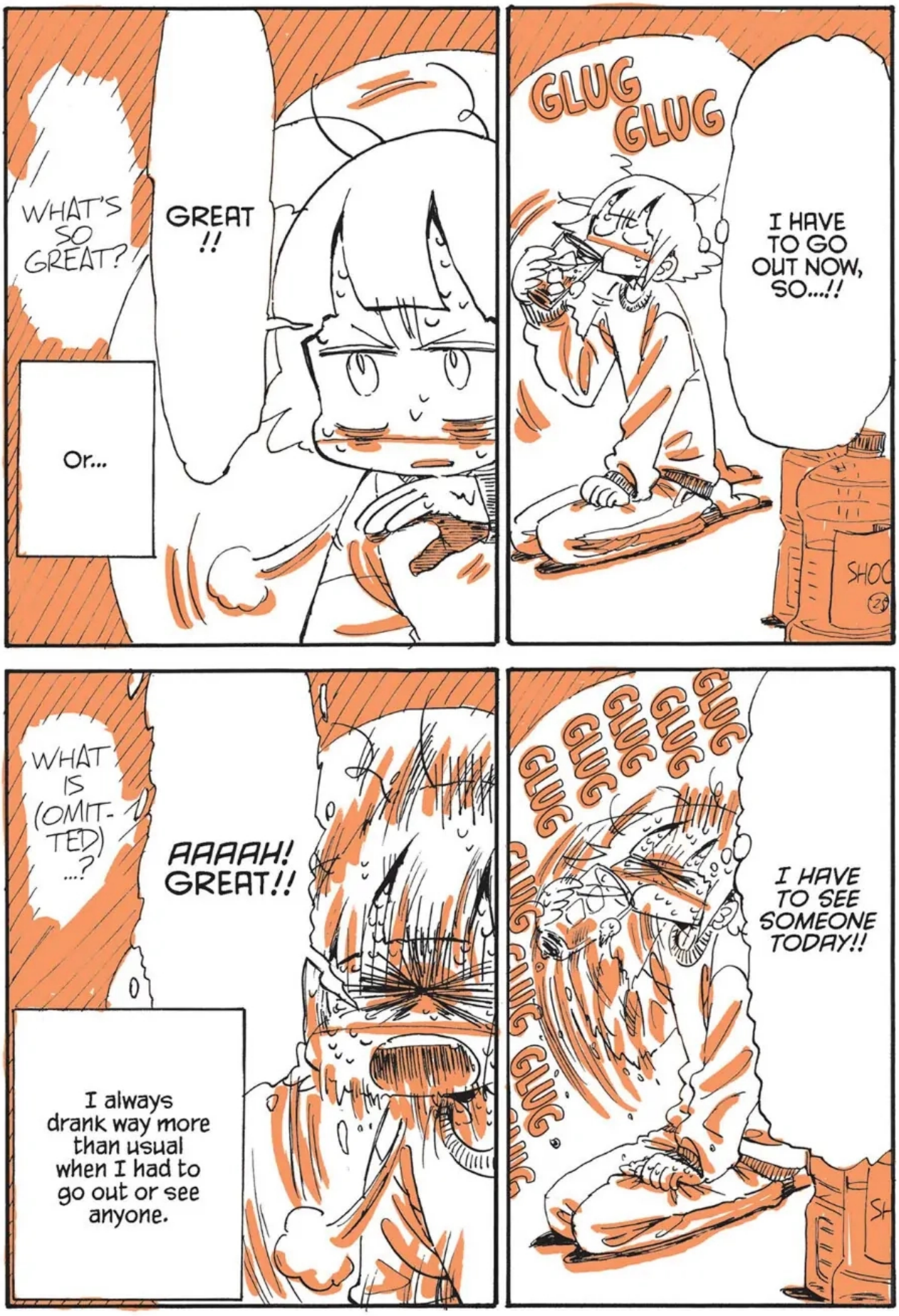
BY THE WAY, HAVE YOU HAD ANYTHING TO DRINK TODAY?

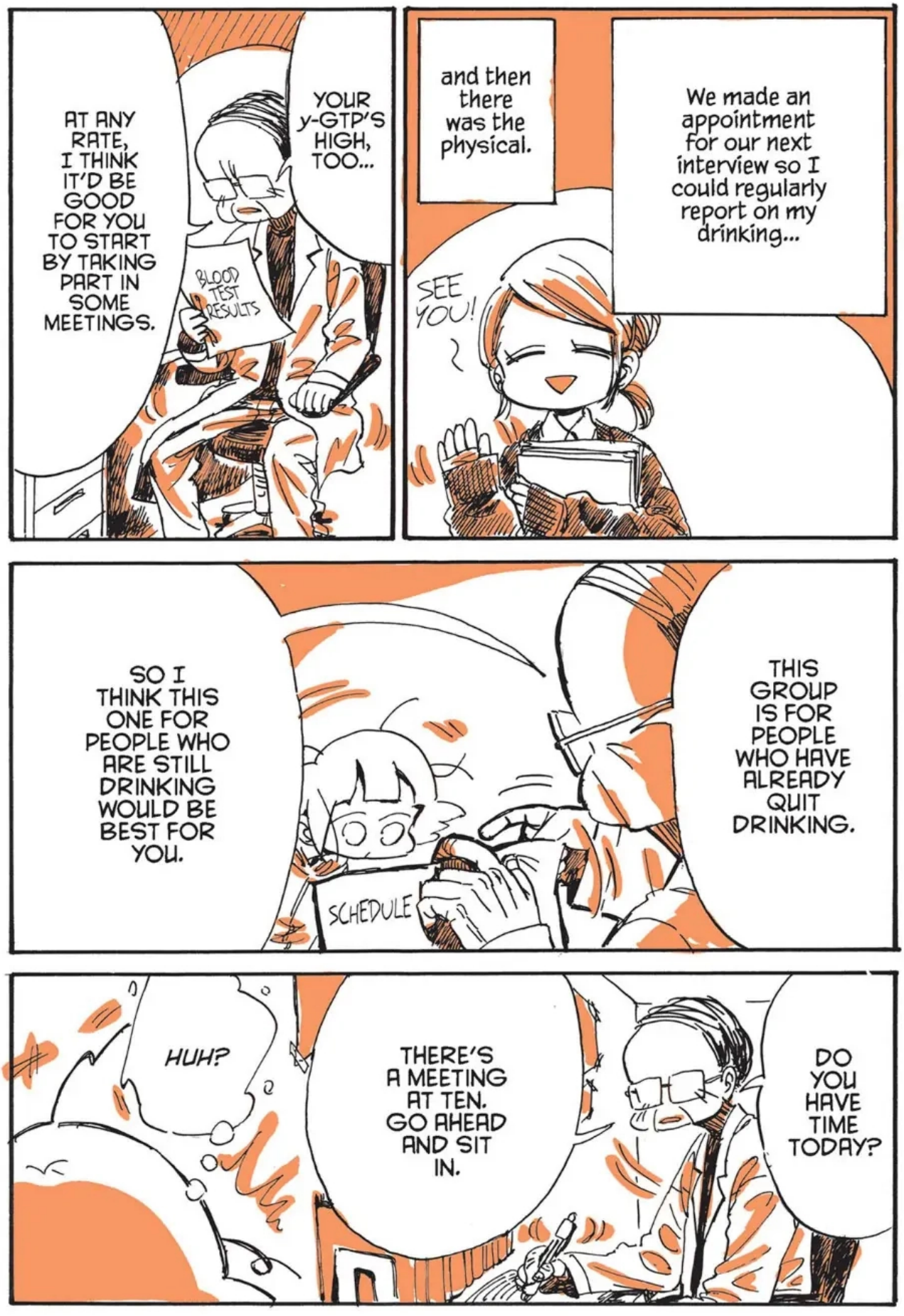
Before the medical check, I had a consultation with the social worker. We talked about my family and my drinking.

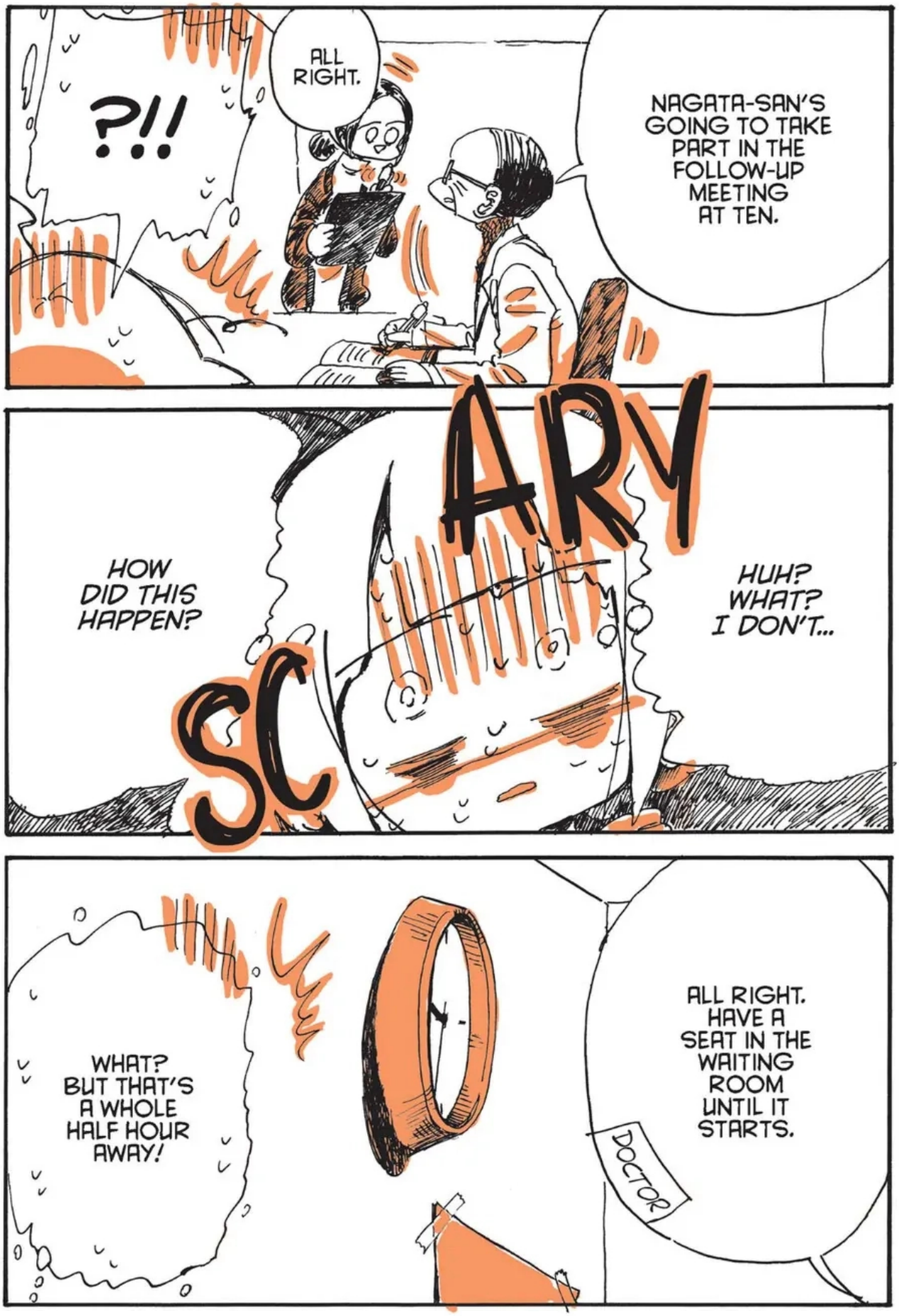
I was quick to lie.
NO.
.....

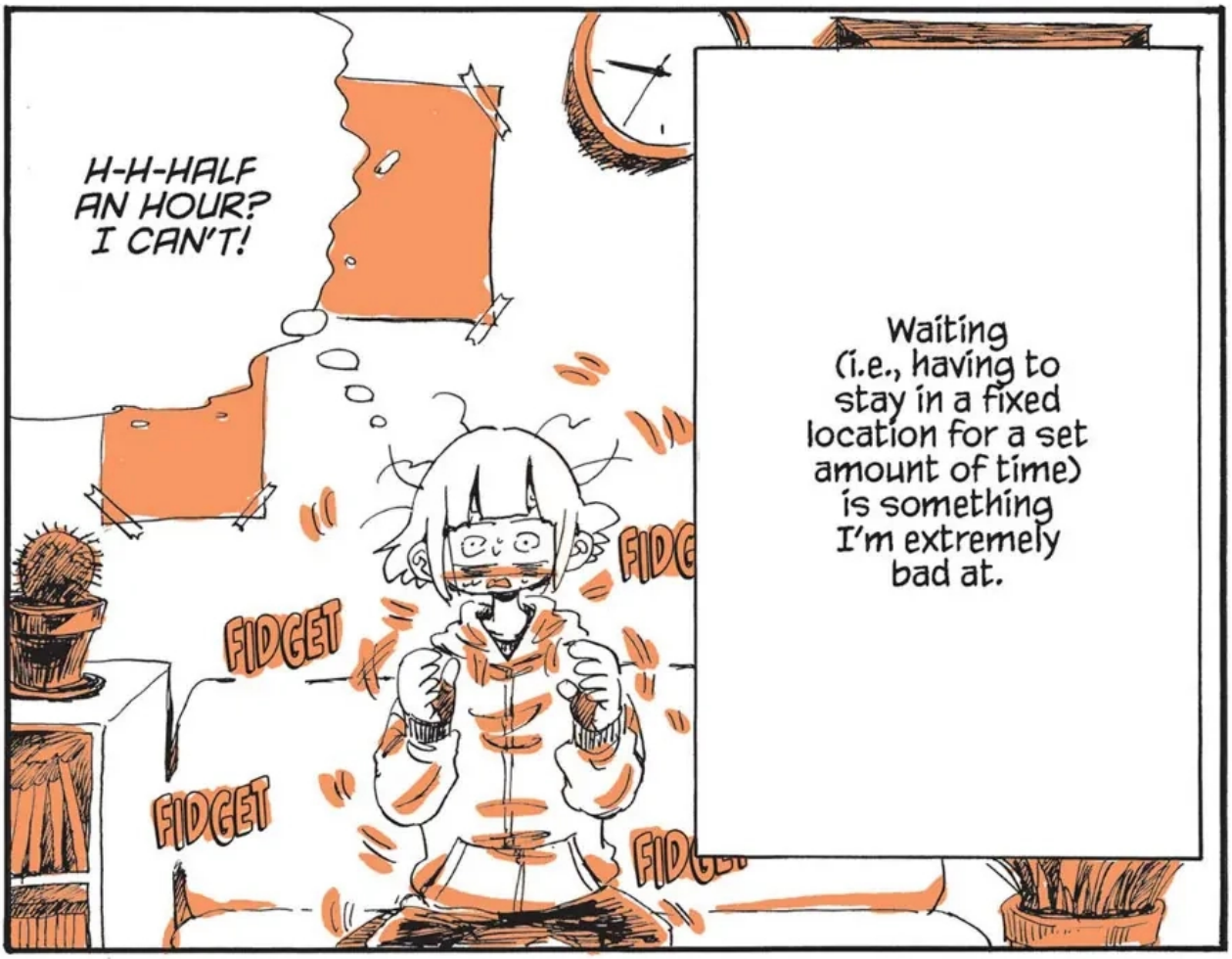

IT WAS STILL VERY EARLY IN THE MORNING.
HNGH...
CLAP
CLAP
SO YOU MADE IT HERE TODAY WITHOUT DRINKING!!

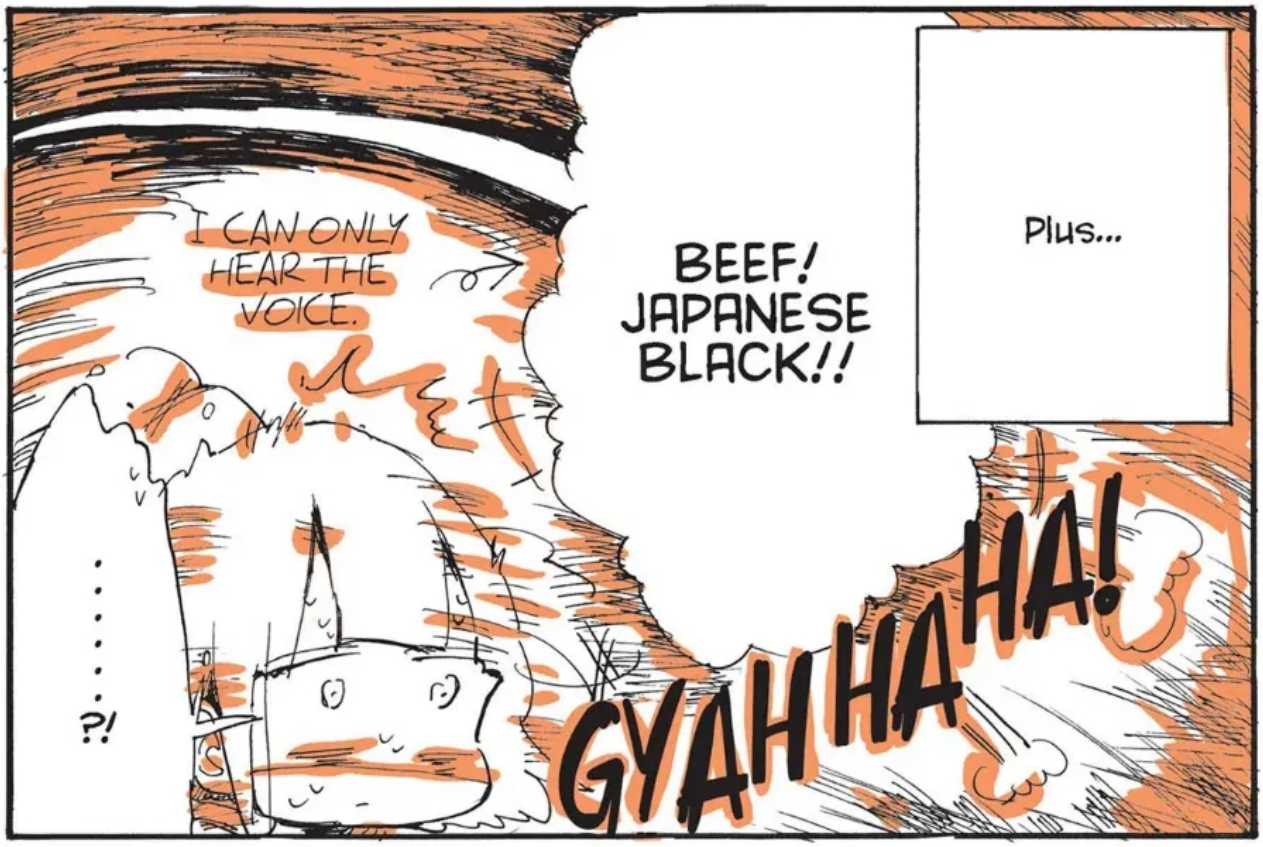

ANXIETY.
SEEING PEOPLE
GOING OUT
NOT FREE TO DRINK FOR A WHILE.
But...

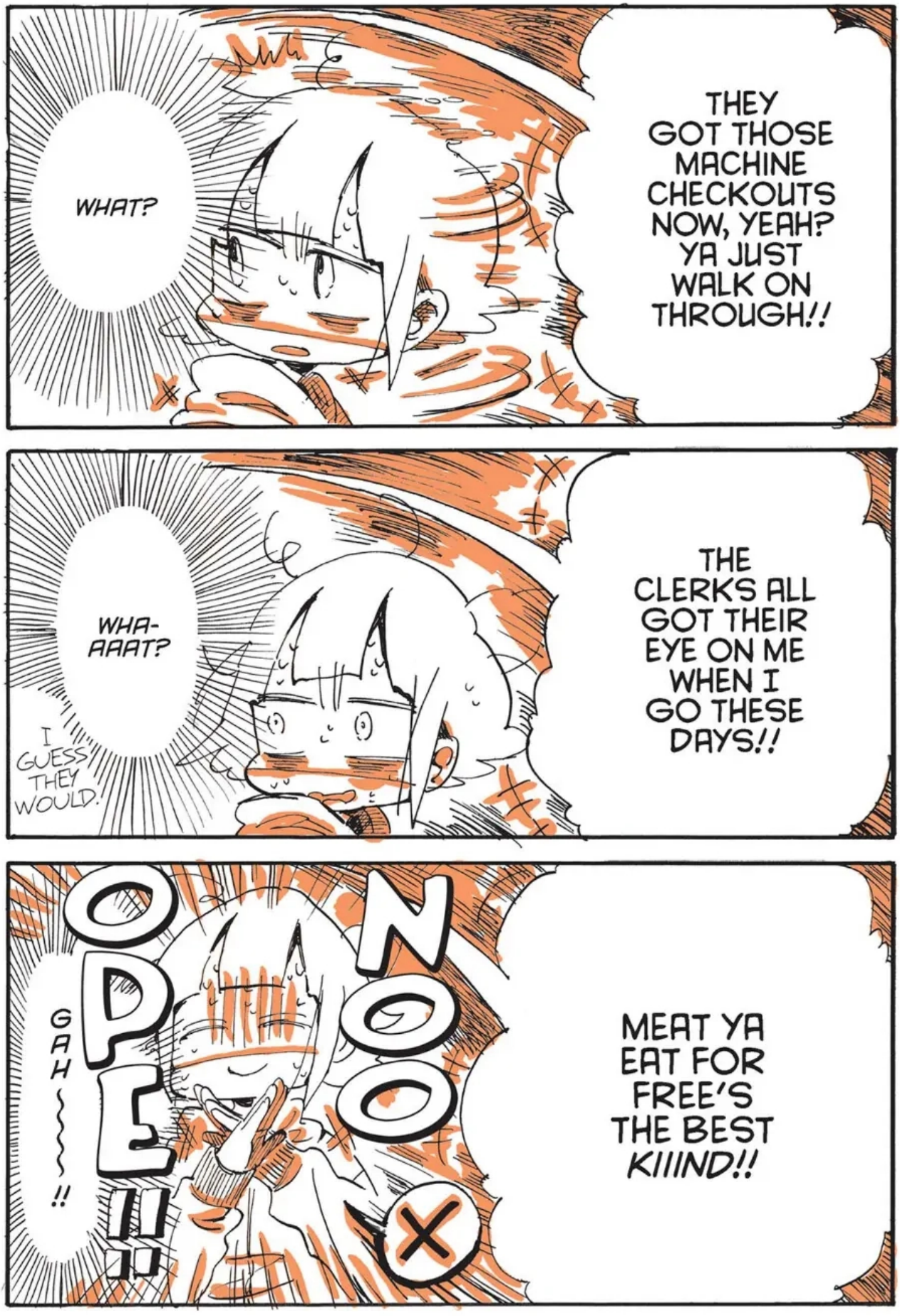

GREAT !!
WHAT'S SO GREAT?
Or...
GLUG GLUG
I HAVE TO GO OUT NOW, SO...!!
AAAAH! GREAT!!
WHAT IS (OMIT-TED) ...?
I always drank way more than usual when I had to go out or see anyone.
I HAVE TO SEE SOMEONE TODAY!!

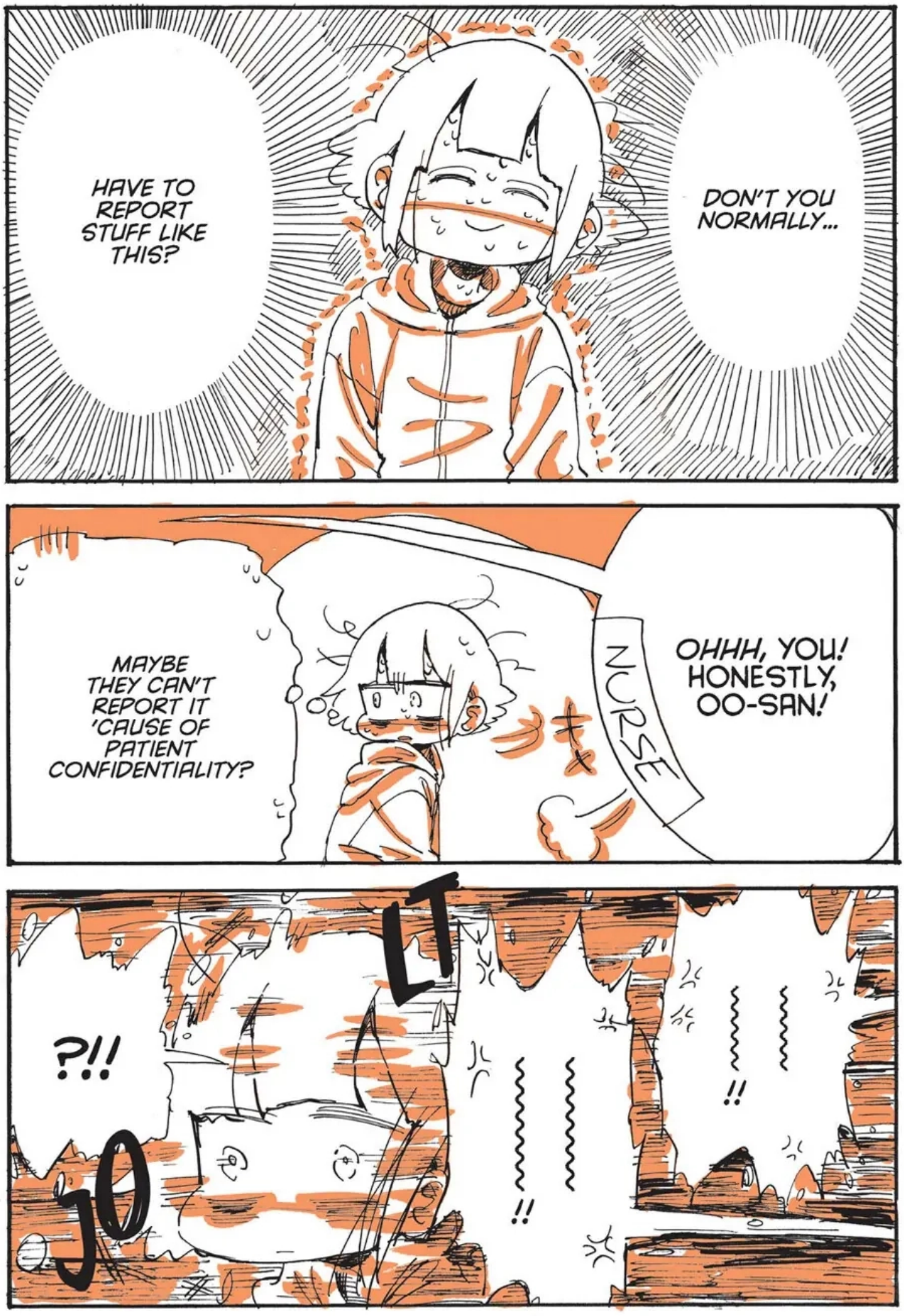

AT ANY RATE, I THINK IT'D BE GOOD FOR YOU TO START BY TAKING PART IN SOME MEETINGS.
BLOOD TEST RESULTS
YOUR y-GTP'S HIGH, TOO...
and then there was the physical.
We made an appointment for our next interview so I could regularly report on my drinking...
SEE YOU!
SO I THINK THIS ONE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE STILL DRINKING WOULD BE BEST FOR YOU.
SCHEDULE
THIS GROUP IS FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALREADY QUIT DRINKING.
HUH?
THERE'S A MEETING AT TEN. GO AHEAD AND SIT IN.
DO YOU HAVE TIME TODAY?

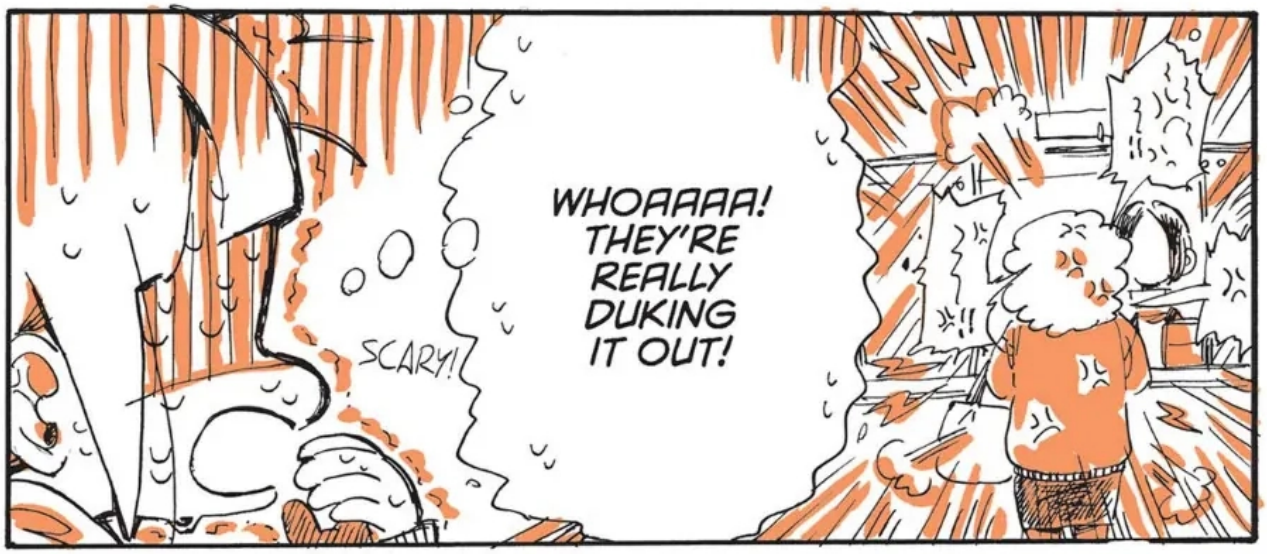

?!!
ALL RIGHT.
NAGATA-SAN'S GOING TO TAKE PART IN THE FOLLOW-UP MEETING AT TEN.
SCARY
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
HUH? WHAT? I DON'T...
WHAT? BUT THAT'S A WHOLE HALF HOUR AWAY!
ALL RIGHT. HAVE A SEAT IN THE WAITING ROOM UNTIL IT STARTS.
DOCTOR

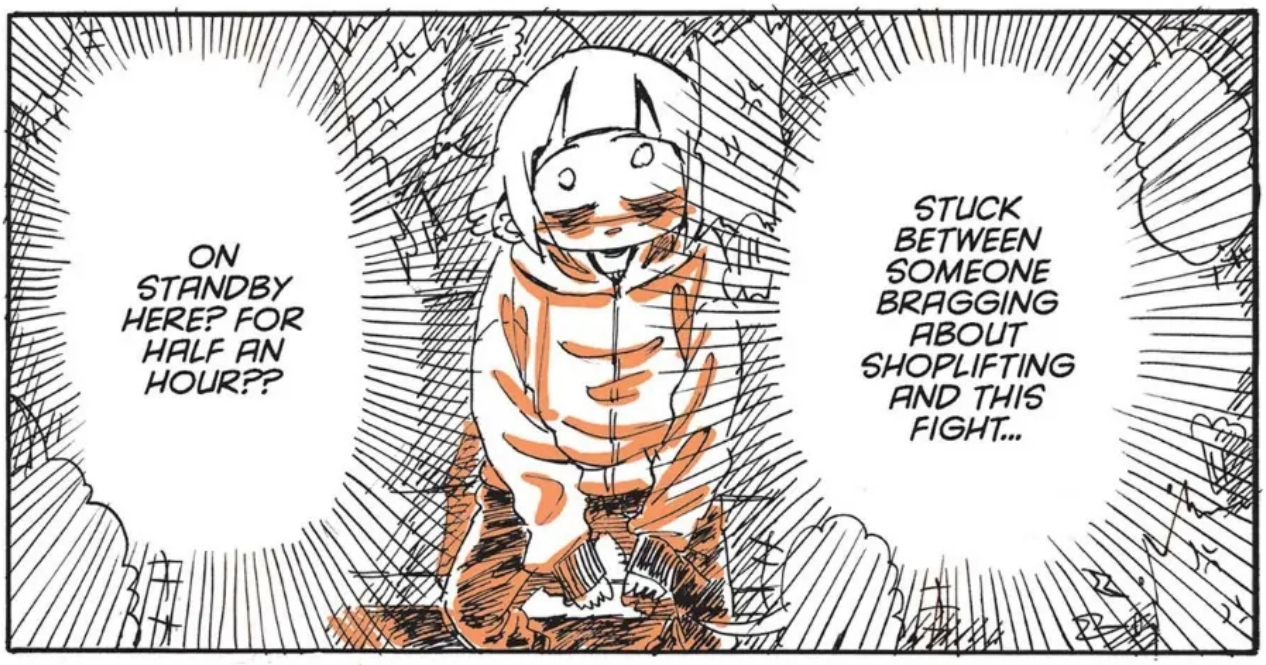

H-H-HALF AN HOUR? I CAN'T!
FIDGET
FIDGET
FIDG
Waiting (i.e., having to stay in a fixed location for a set amount of time) is something I'm extremely bad at.

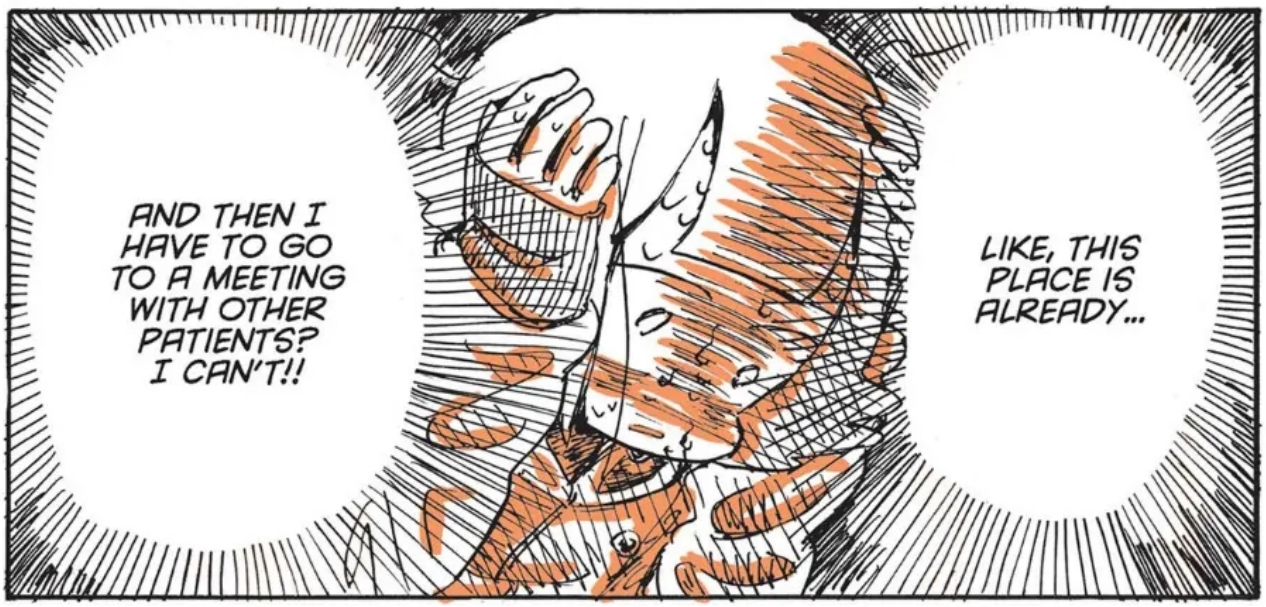

I CAN ONLY HEAR THE VOICE.
BEEF! JAPANESE BLACK!!
Plus...
GYAH HA HA!
.....?!

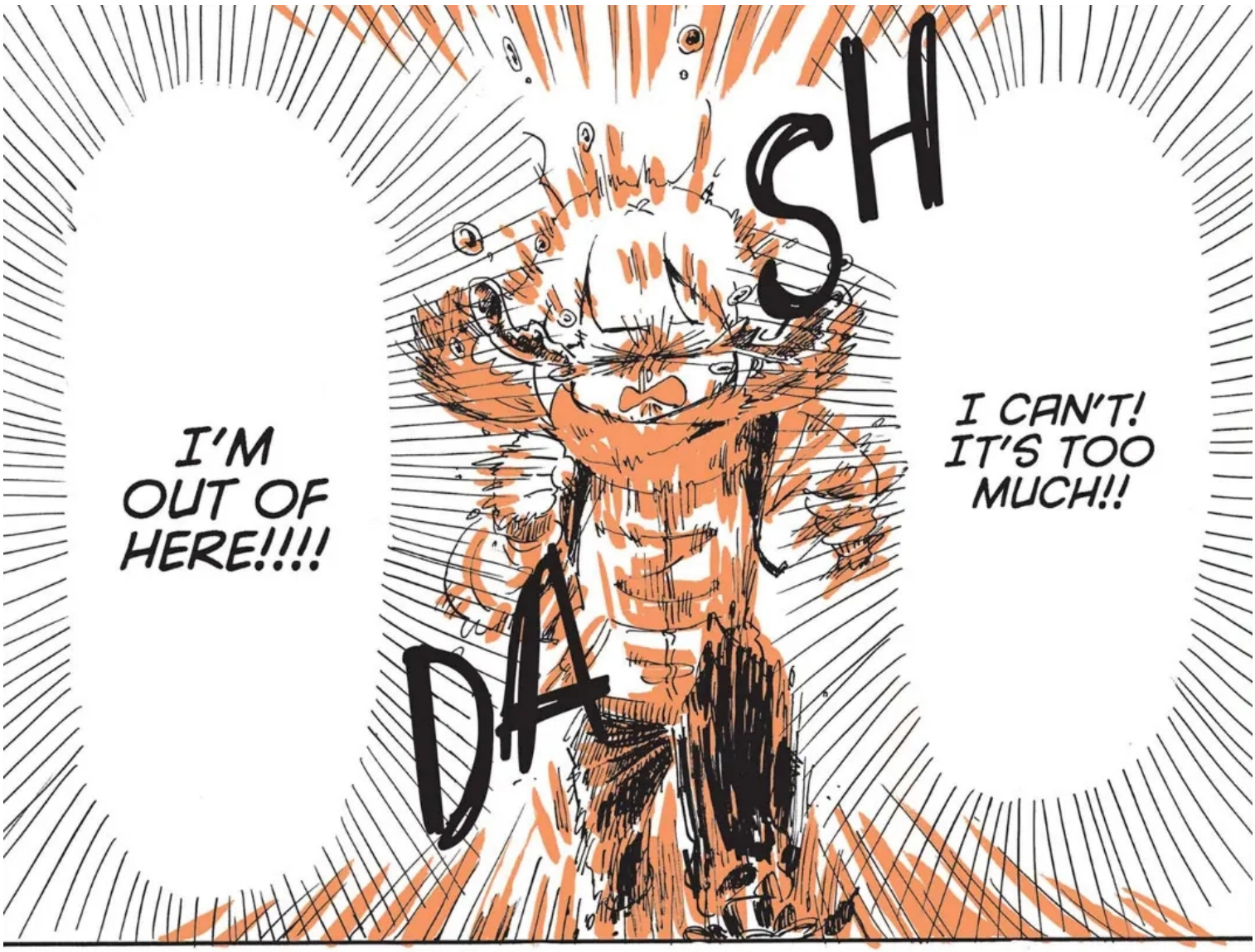

WHAT?
THEY GOT THOSE MACHINE CHECKOUTS NOW, YEAH? YA JUST WALK ON THROUGH!!
WHA-AAAT?
I GUESS THEY WOULD.
THE CLERKS ALL GOT THEIR EYE ON ME WHEN I GO THESE DAYS!!
GAH~~~!!
OPEN!!
NO
MEAT YA EAT FOR FREE'S THE BEST KIIIND!!


HAVE TO REPORT STUFF LIKE THIS?
DON'T YOU NORMALLY...
MAYBE THEY CAN'T REPORT IT 'CAUSE OF PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY?
NURSE
OHHH, YOU! HONESTLY, OO-SAN!
?!!
GO
LT
!!
!!

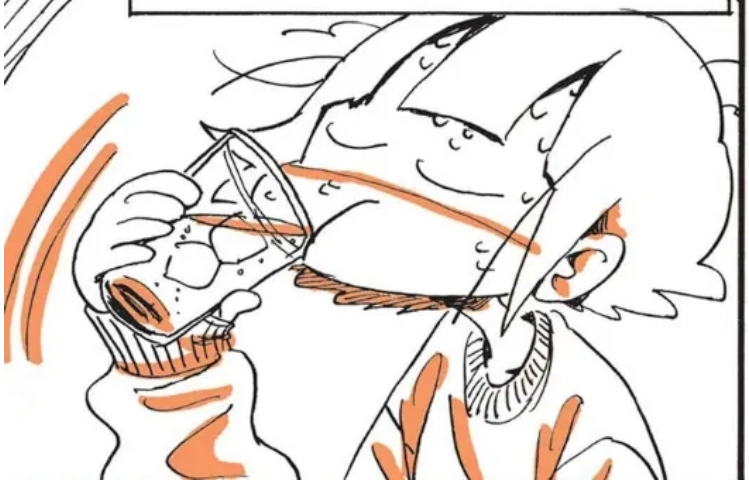

WHOAAAA! THEY'RE REALLY DUKING IT OUT!
SCARY!

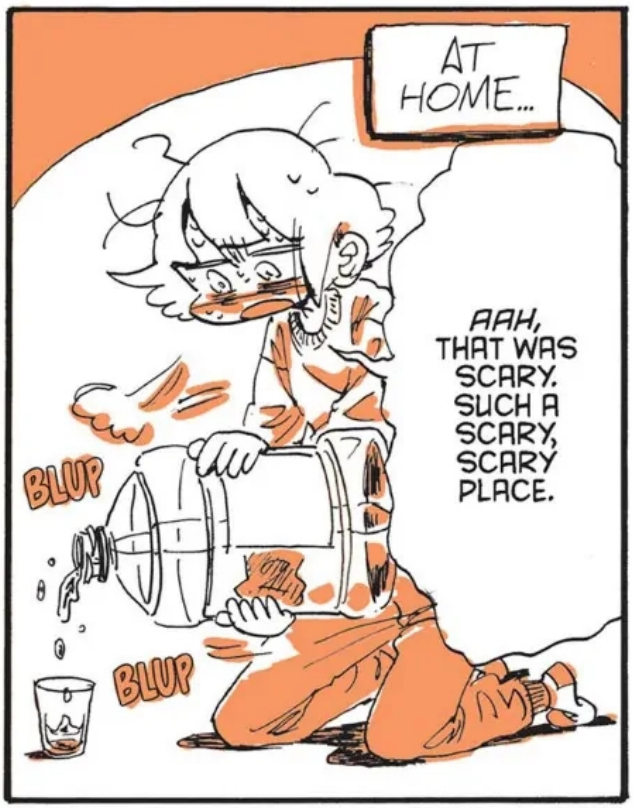

ON STANDBY HERE? FOR HALF AN HOUR??
STUCK BETWEEN SOMEONE BRAGGING ABOUT SHOPLIFTING AND THIS FIGHT...

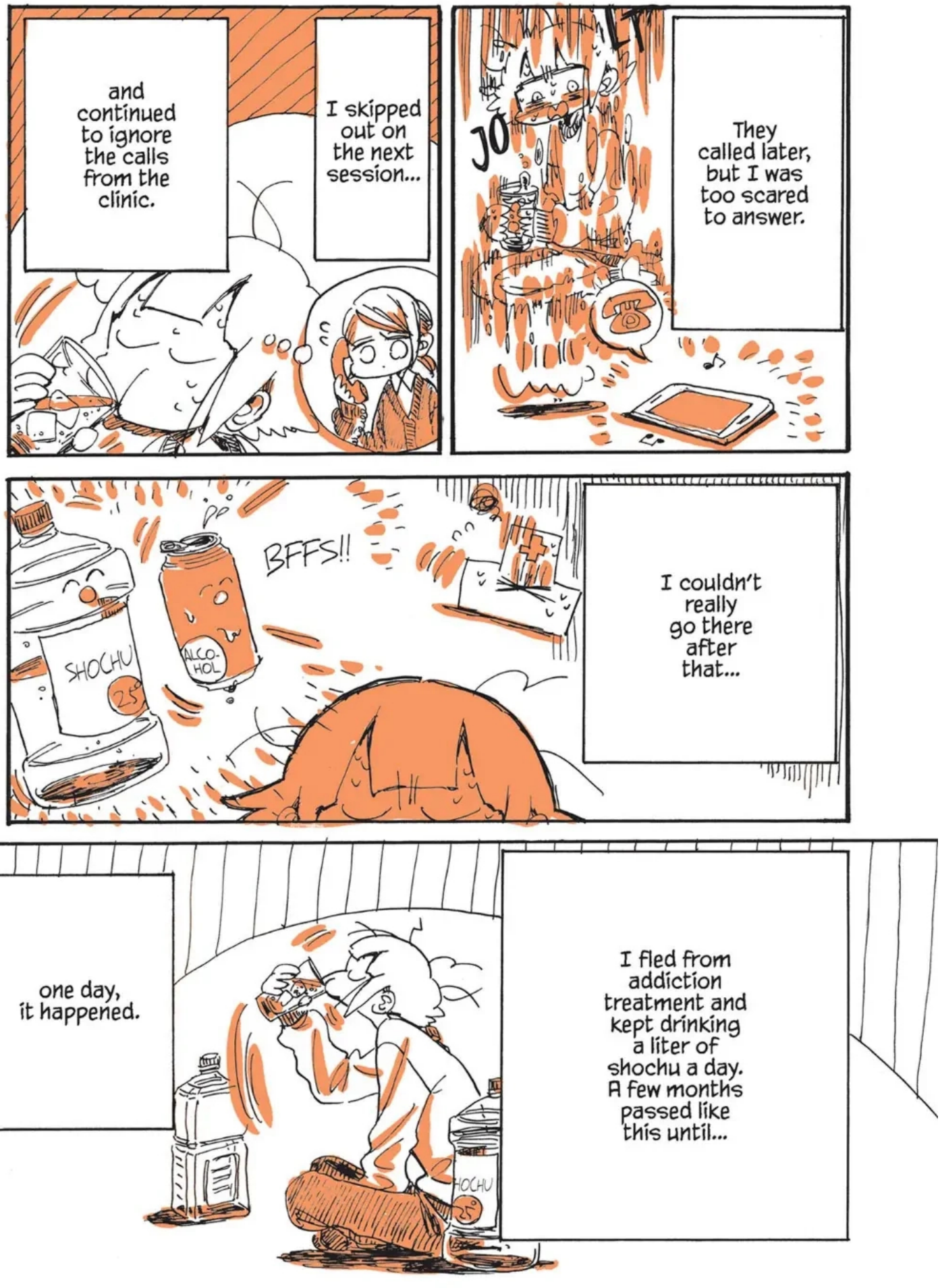

AND THEN I HAVE TO GO TO A MEETING WITH OTHER PATIENTS? I CAN'T!!
LIKE, THIS PLACE IS ALREADY...

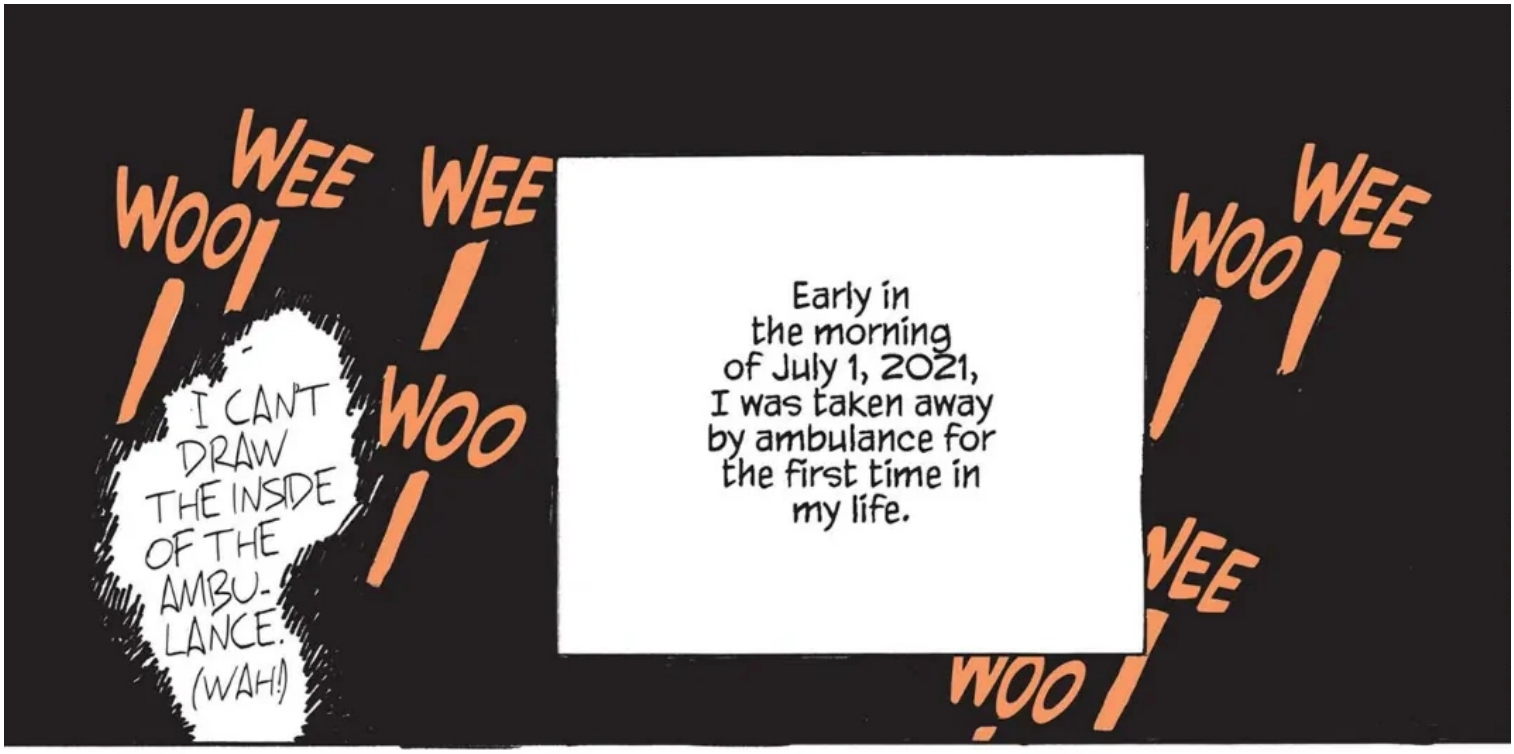


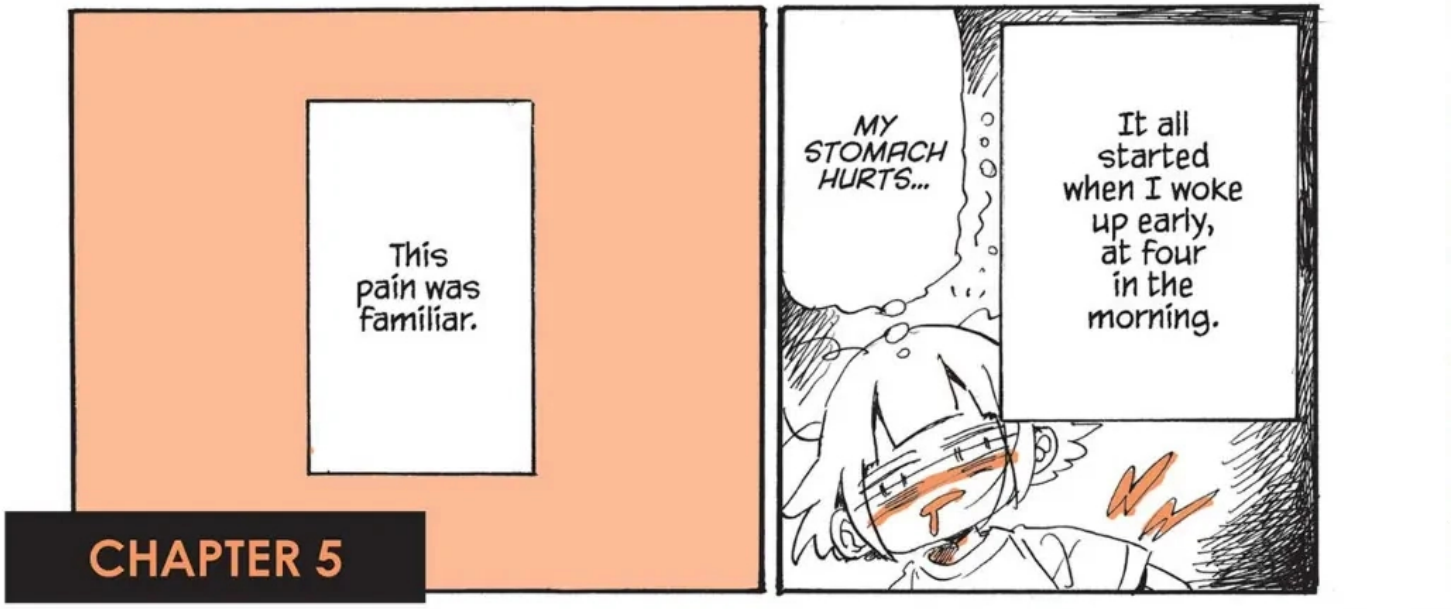

That's what I said as I pulled back in fear, but I was basically part of the same pack as the patients at that clinic.





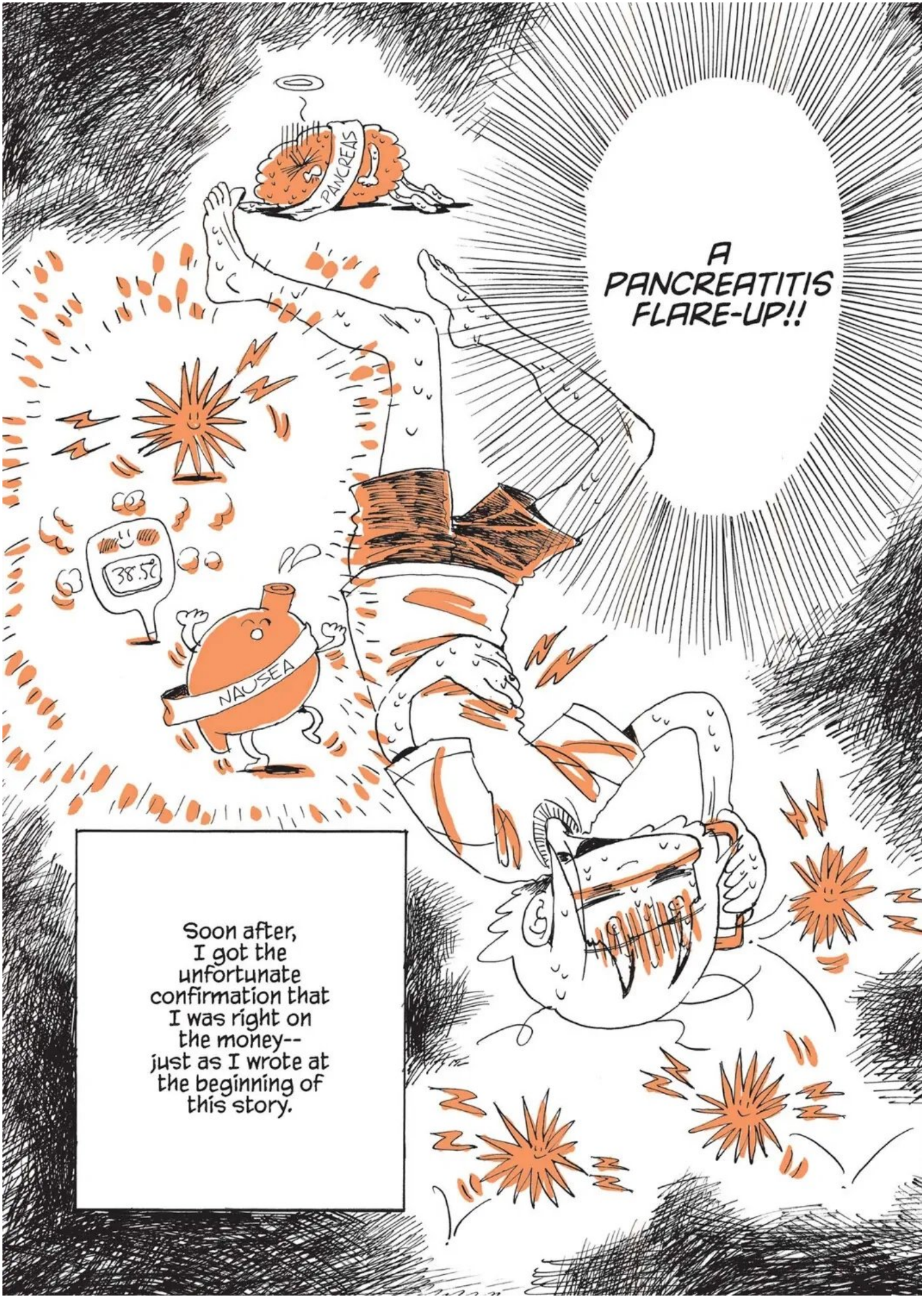

and continued to ignore the calls from the clinic.
I skipped out on the next session...
They called later, but I was too scared to answer.
I couldn't really go there after that...
BFFS!!
SHOCHU
ALCO-HOL
one day, it happened.
I fled from addiction treatment and kept drinking a liter of shochu a day. A few months passed like this until...



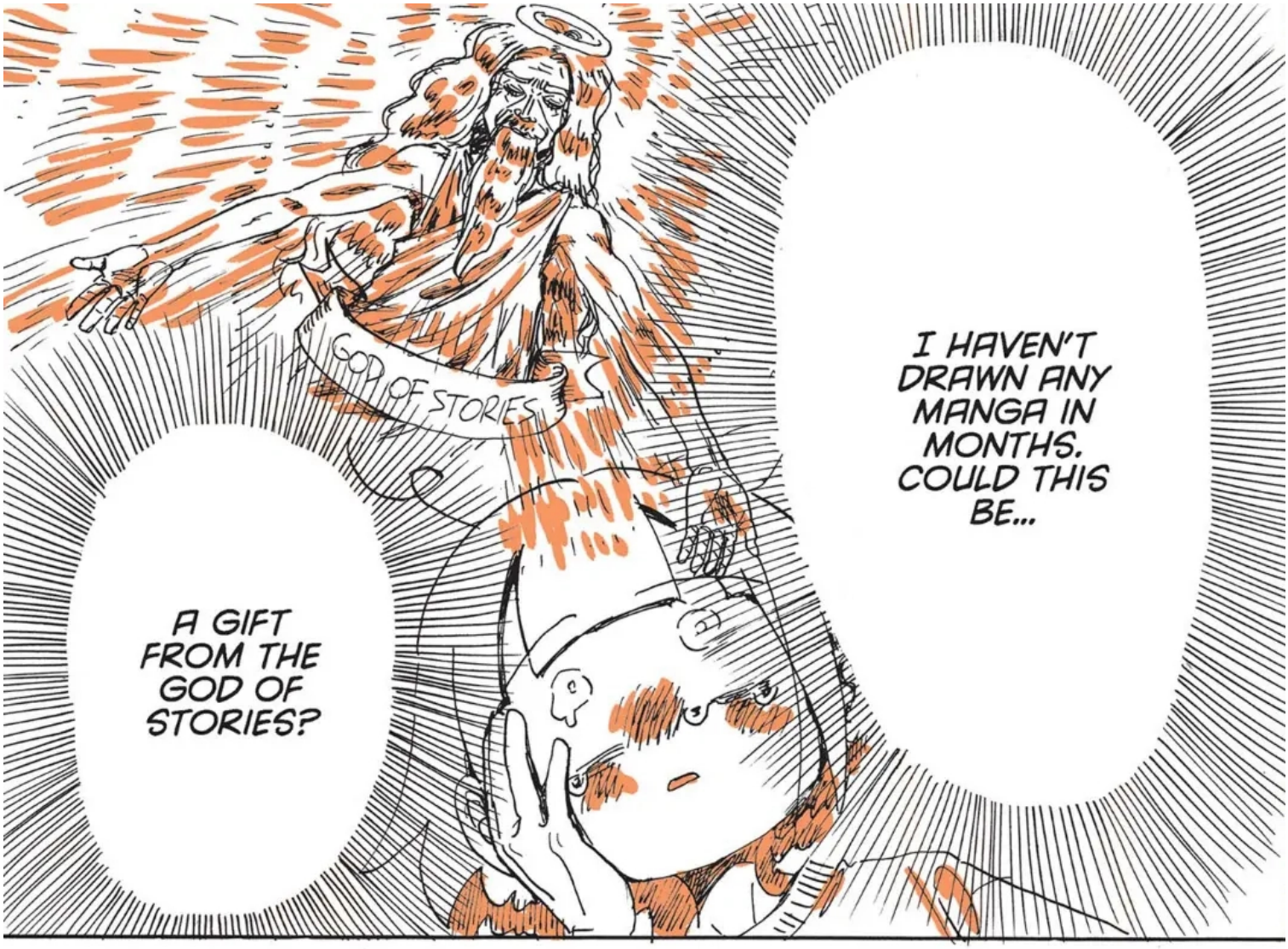



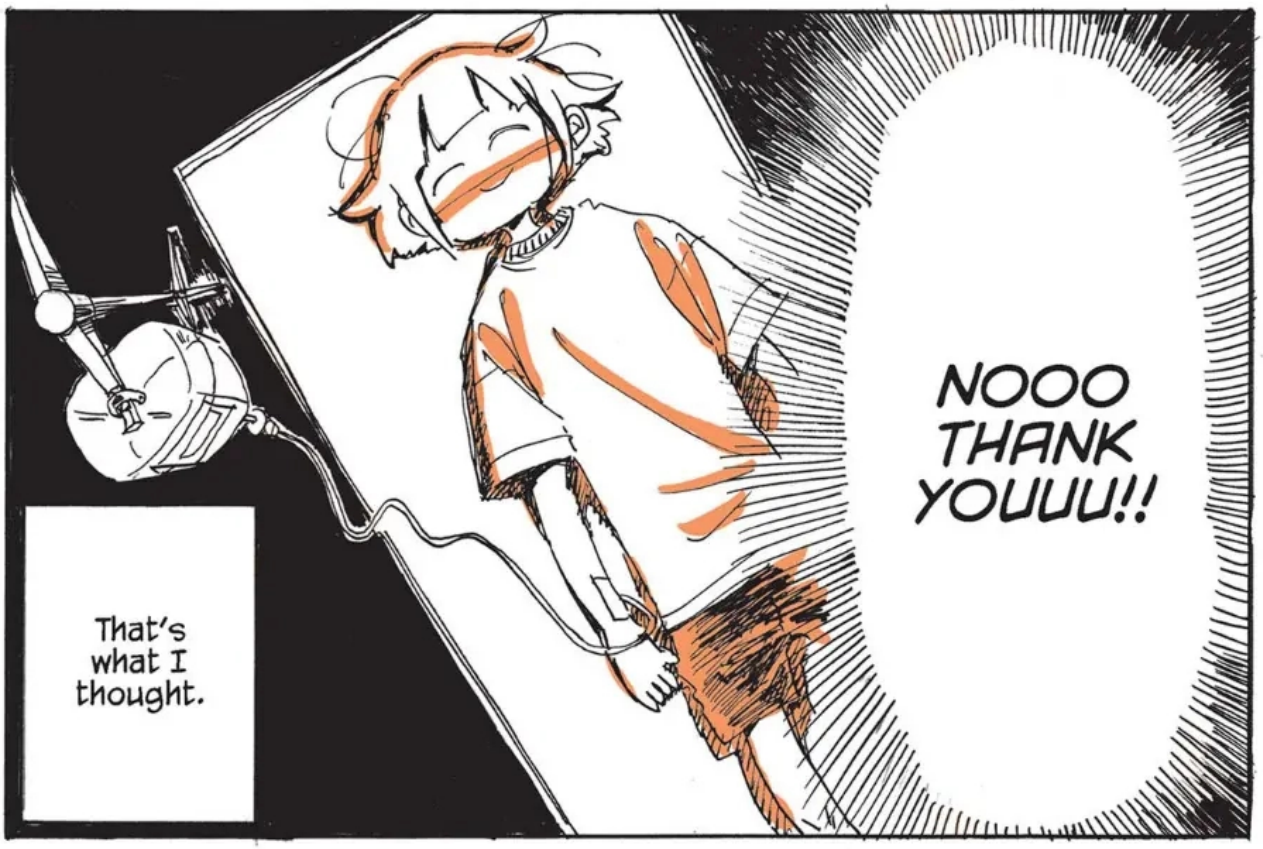

## CHAPTER 5

※ 7119 is the equivalent of 911.


A PANCREATITIS FLARE-UP!!
PANCREAS
38.5℃
NAUSEA
Soon after, I got the unfortunate confirmation that I was right on the money-- just as I wrote at the beginning of this story.

BIN—
I THINK IT'S PANCREATITIS.
After blood tests and a CT scan...
GO!
The rest is as you saw in the prologue.
I was taken to the hospital, face up in the middle of the rain...
SHAA
AAA
BLOOSH
BLISH
AH!!
.....!!
YOU WAIT HERE FOR AN HOUR OR SO.
As I lay there on the cold, hard bed, hooked up to an IV...


GOD OF STORIES
I HAVEN'T DRAWN ANY MANGA IN MONTHS. COULD THIS BE...
A GIFT FROM THE GOD OF STORIES?


NOOO THANK YOUUU!!
That's what I thought.

My family brought what I needed that day to be admitted.

MY MOM'S, GRABBED IN A HURRY.

JUST WHAT THEY COULD THROW TOGETHER FOR ME AT MY PARENTS'.

MY GRANDMA'S, GRABBED IN A HURRY.

ET CETERA...

And so, I was hospitalized.

LOTS OF PEOPLE DIDN'T FOLLOW THIS RULE, AND I OFTEN FORGOT, MYSELF.

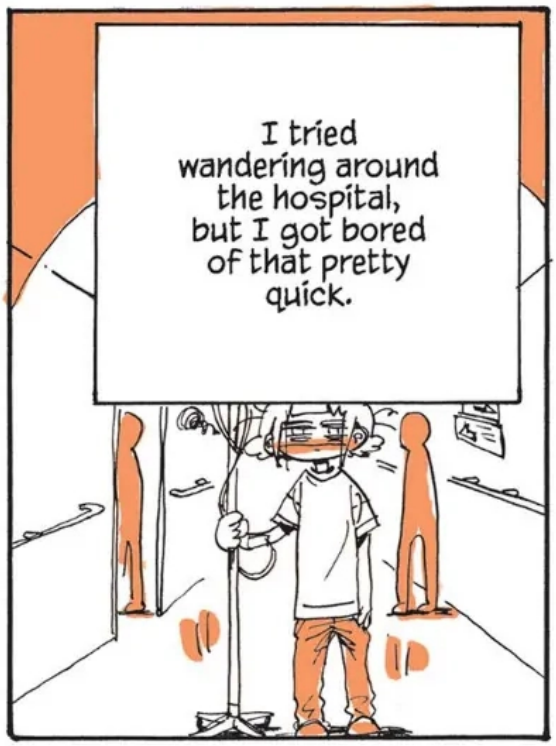
And everyone in the building had to wear a mask.

I CAN'T BREATHE.

As a COVID precaution, my parents had to leave things for me with the office on the first floor, and the nurse would go get them.

NAGATA-SAN, HERE ARE YOUR THINGS!

no trips out and no visitors.
VISITORS
BUT ...!!
OUTSIDE EXCURSION
The biggest changes from pre-COVID time were...


I tried wandering around the hospital, but I got bored of that pretty quick.

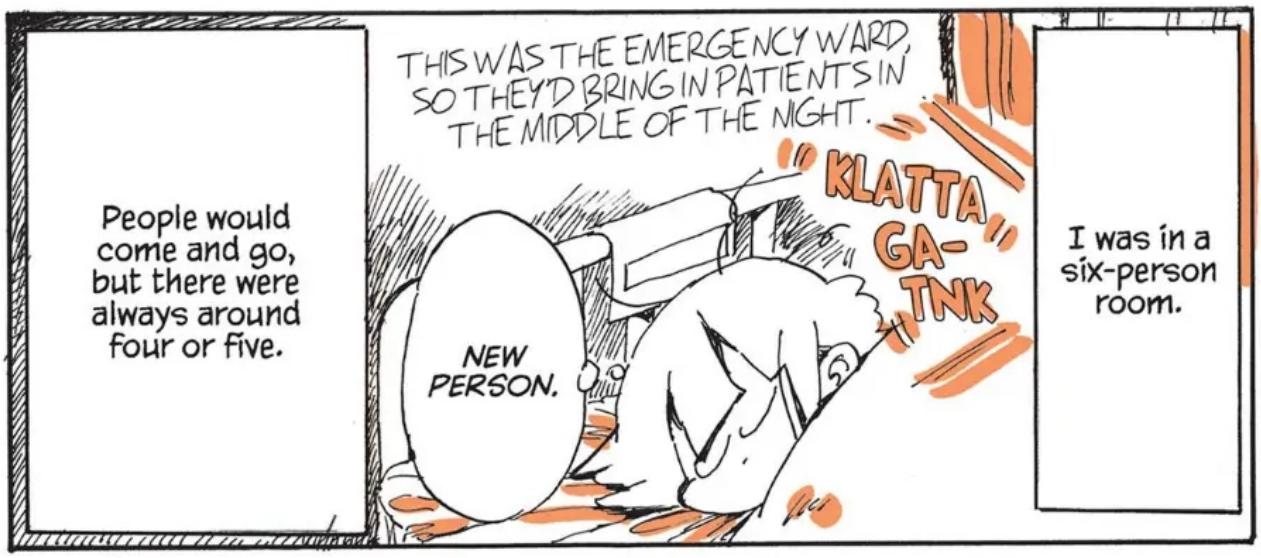
With these things forbidden, there was nothing to lift my spirits.

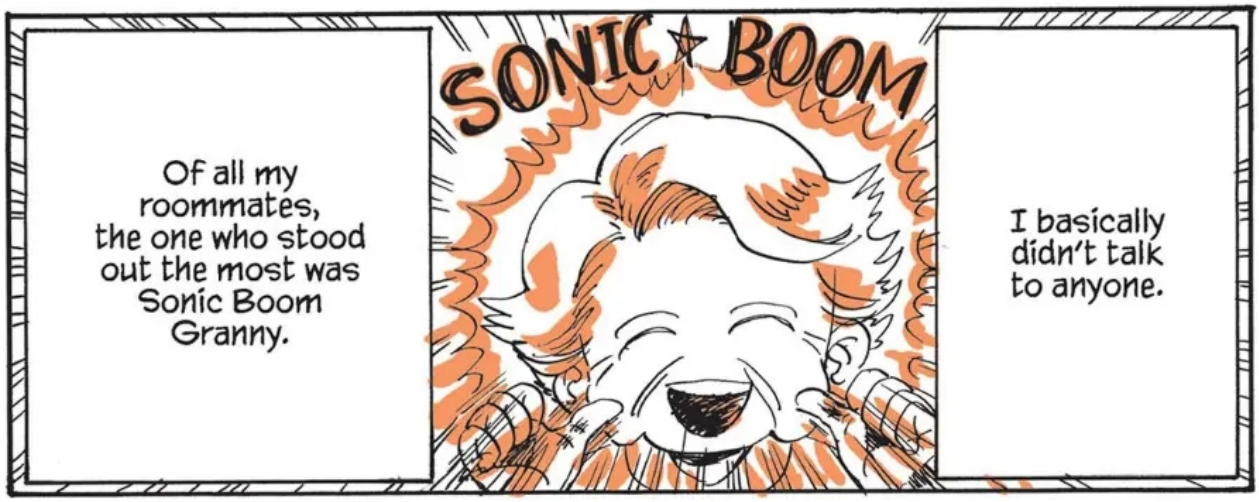
but not being able to actually see people was just painful.
LINE
LINE
LINE
LINE
LINE
LINE
LINE
LINE
MOM
My mom messaged with me on Line every day...

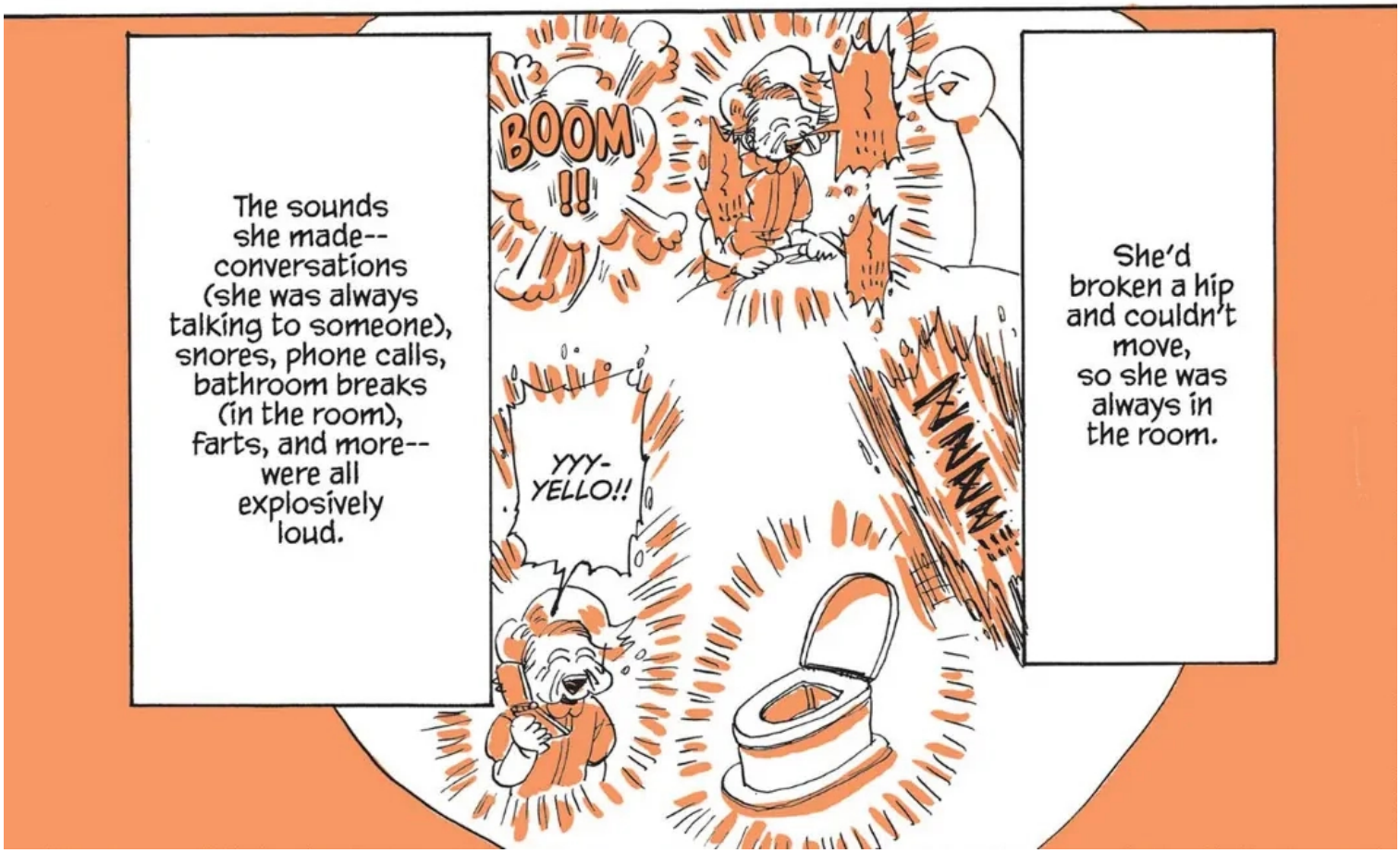
WHY
GIFT SHOP
?!
Another COVID precaution was that the gift shop was closed on weekends.

I was spurred on by the fact that buying limited items in a limited time frame didn't lift my spirits.
SHAMPOO

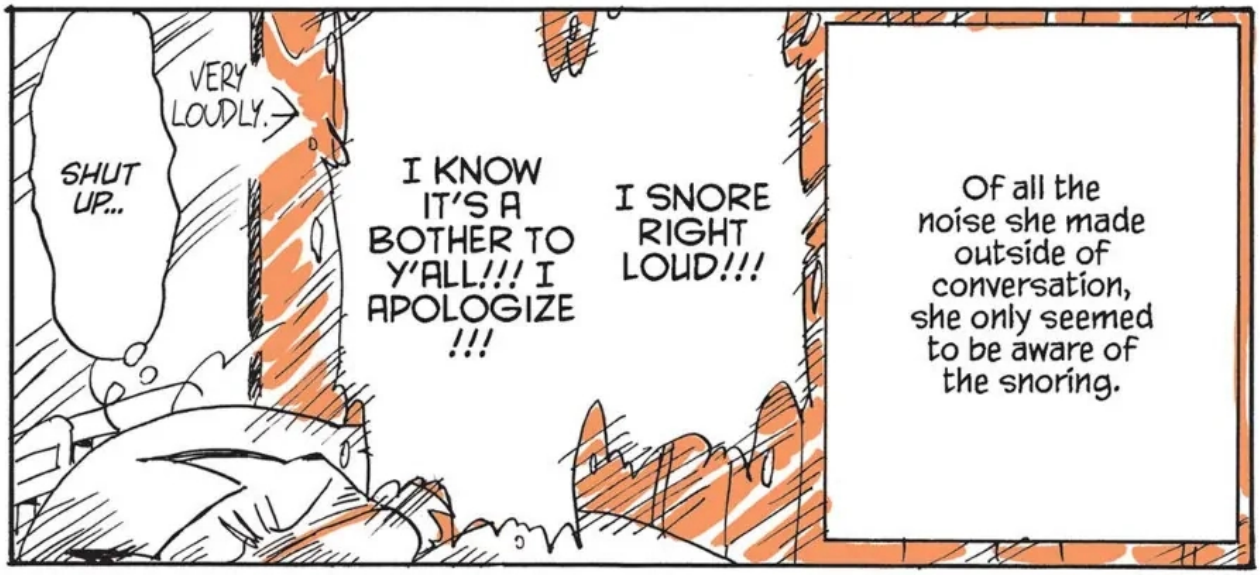
The lack of these freedoms was a big driver toward escape.
TEA
IT'S LIKE... THIS'S PRETTY DIFFERENT FROM THE LAST TIME I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL.

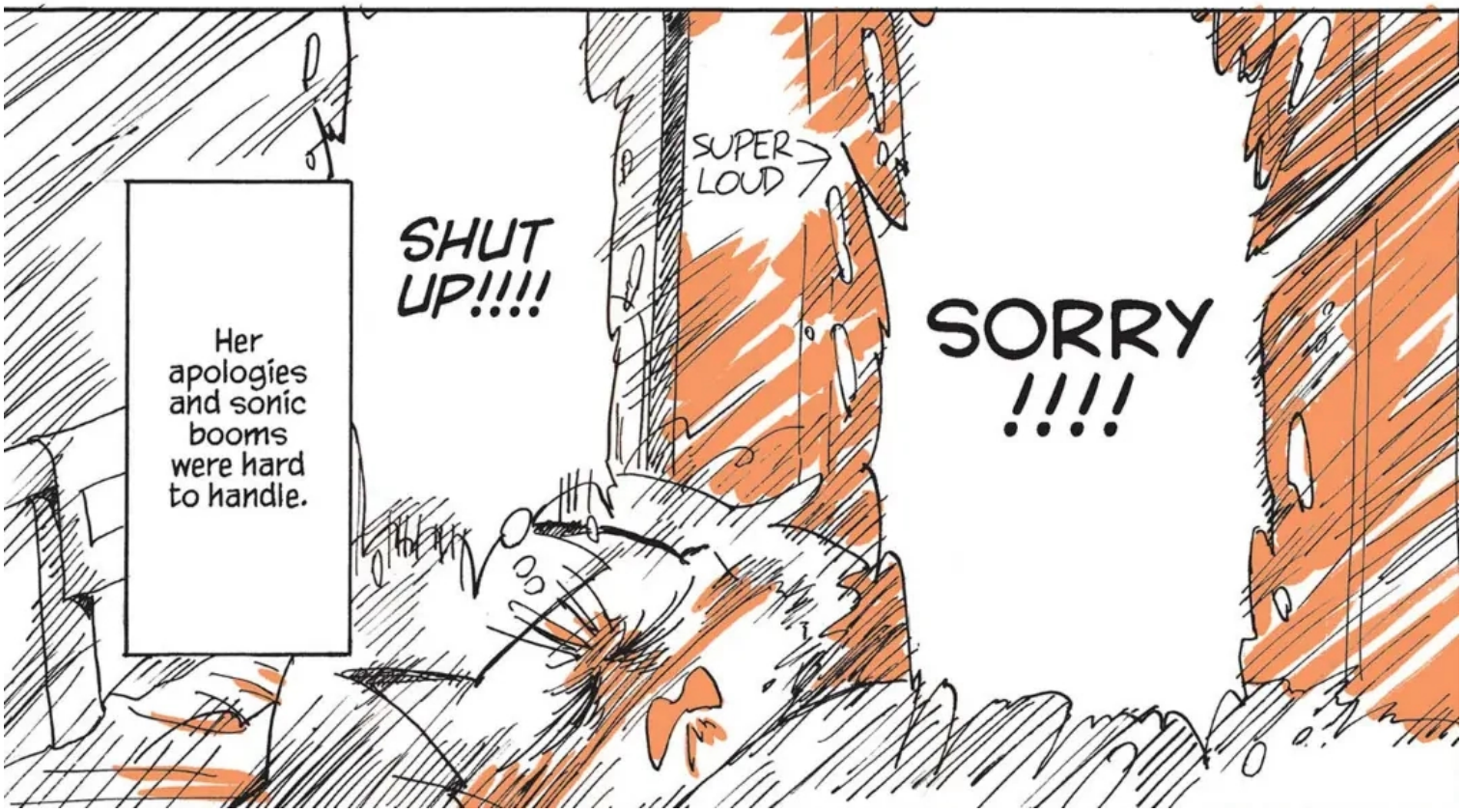

People would come and go, but there were always around four or five.
THIS WAS THE EMERGENCY WARD, SO THEY'D BRING IN PATIENTS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.
NEW PERSON.
KLATTA GA-TNK
I was in a six-person room.


Of all my roommates, the one who stood out the most was Sonic Boom Granny.
SONIC ★ BOOM
I basically didn't talk to anyone.

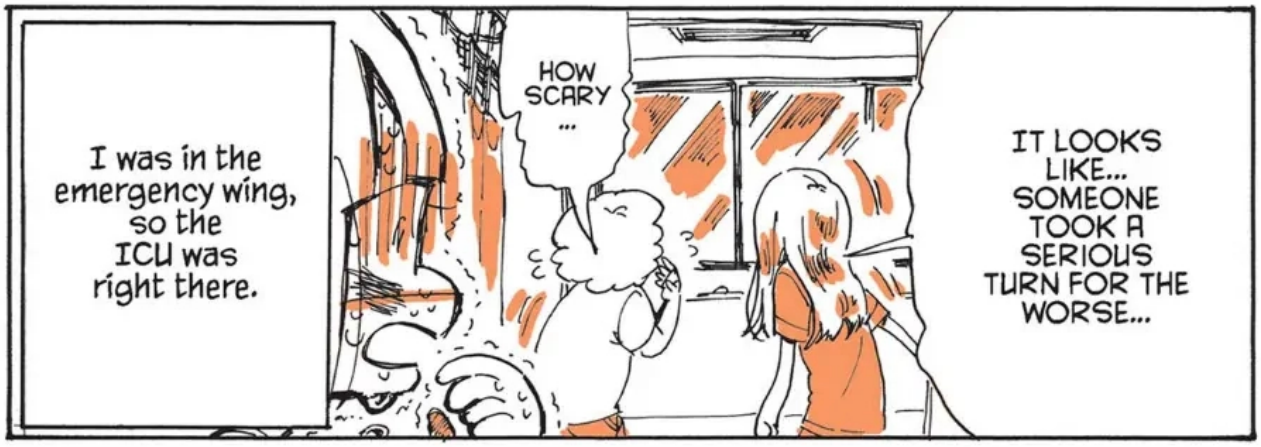

The sounds she made-- conversations (she was always talking to someone), snores, phone calls, bathroom breaks (in the room), farts, and more-- were all explosively loud.
BOOM !!
YYY-YELLO!!
She'd broken a hip and couldn't move, so she was always in the room.

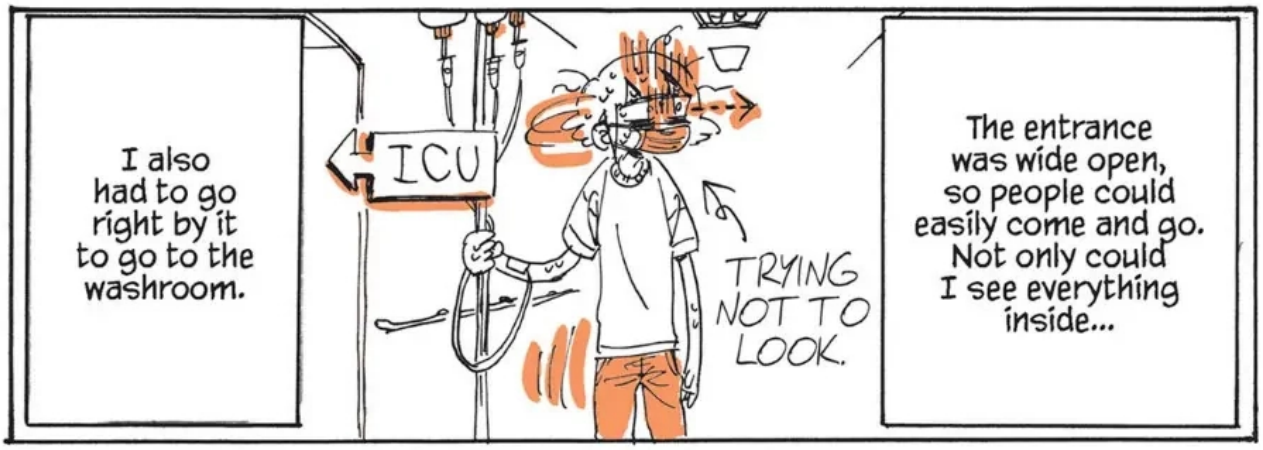
To be honest, all the noise was pretty rough, so she was another big reason for the escape.
BOOM
I was on IV 24/7, so I was basically stuck in place.


VERY LOUDLY.
SHUT UP...
I KNOW IT'S A BOTHER TO Y'ALL!!! I APOLOGIZE !!!
I SNORE RIGHT LOUD!!!
Of all the noise she made outside of conversation, she only seemed to be aware of the snoring.

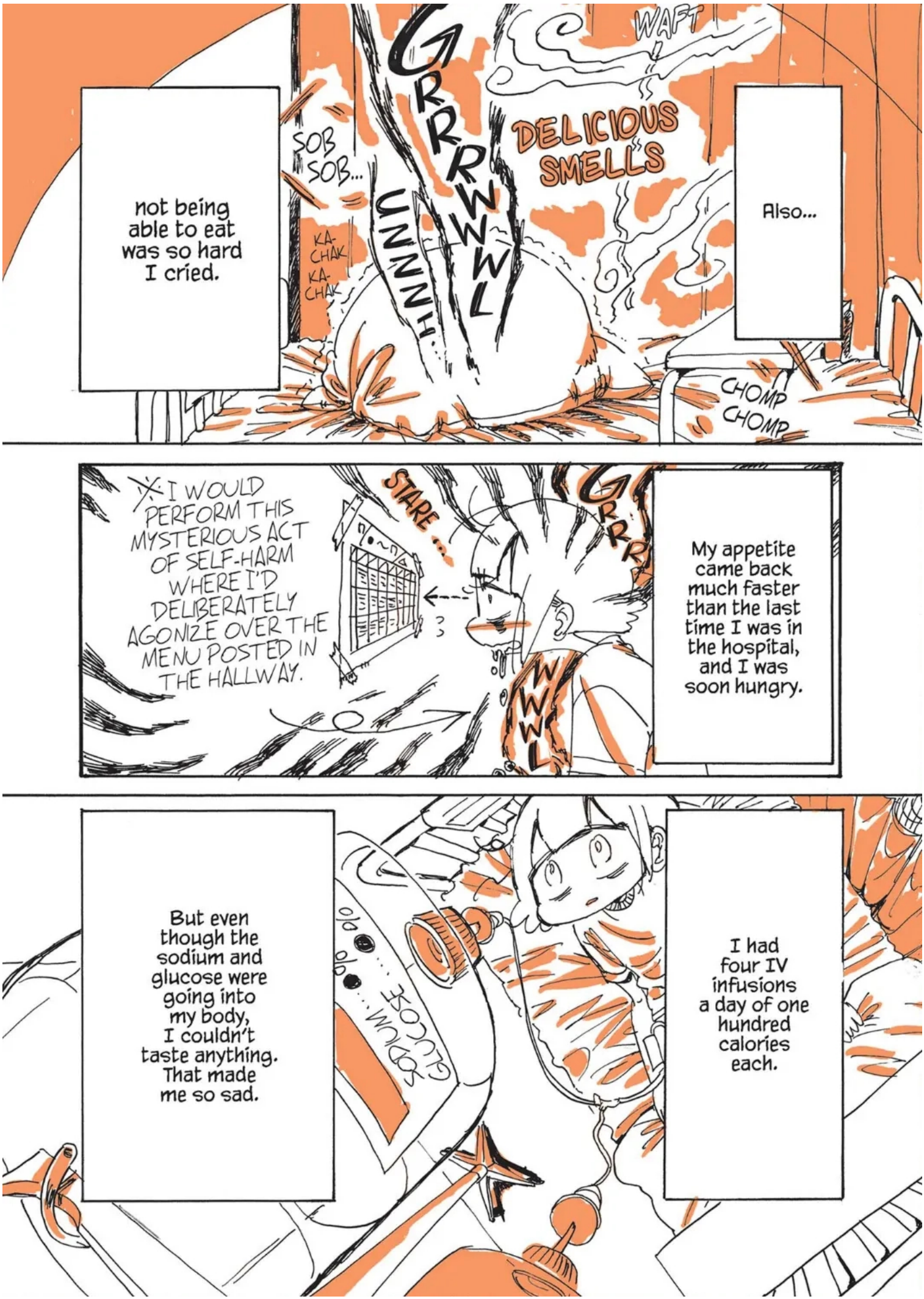

Her apologies and sonic booms were hard to handle.
SUPER LOUD
SHUT UP!!!!
SORRY !!!!

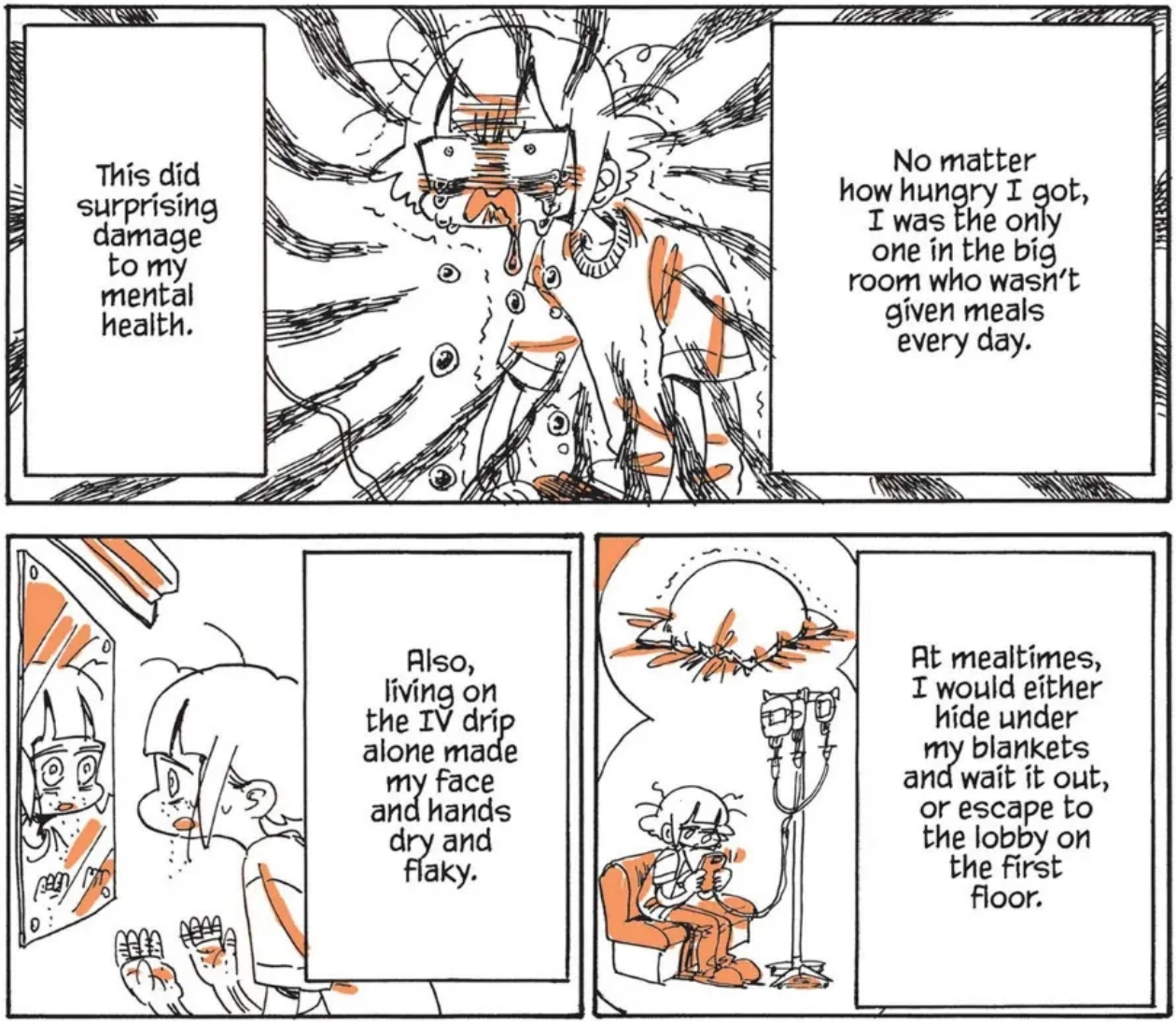
WHO'S HER DOCTOR?! CALL THEM RIGHT NOW!!
KLATTA
KLATTA
KLATTA
?!
JOLT
OO-SAN?! OO-SAN?!

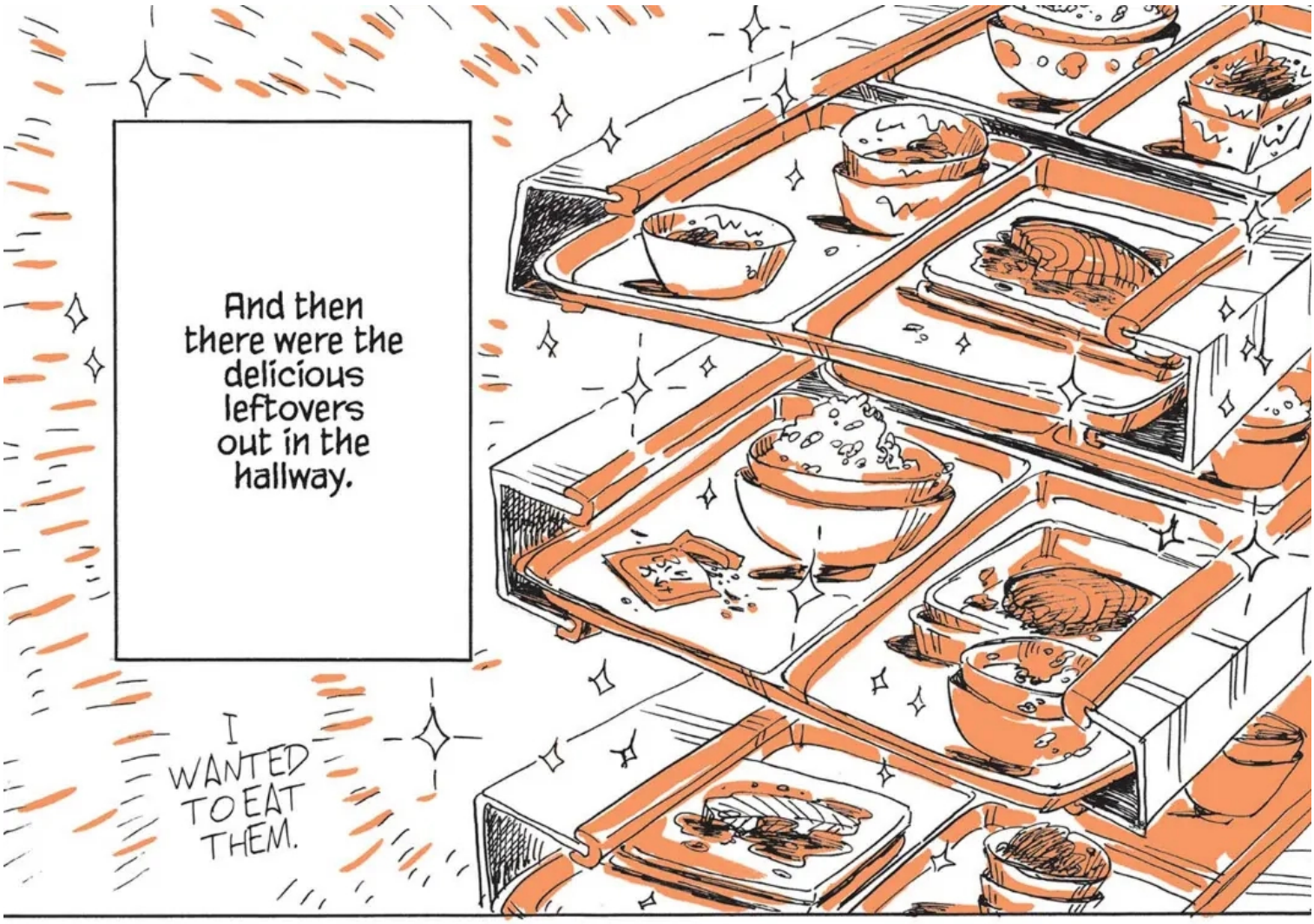

I was in the emergency wing, so the ICU was right there.
HOW SCARY ...
IT LOOKS LIKE... SOMEONE TOOK A SERIOUS TURN FOR THE WORSE...


I also had to go right by it to go to the washroom.
ICU
TRYING NOT TO LOOK.
The entrance was wide open, so people could easily come and go. Not only could I see everything inside...

It took a real mental toll on me to always be right next to the place where people's lives were up in the air.
ICU
which meant I'd sometimes see them doing CPR on patients in crisis.

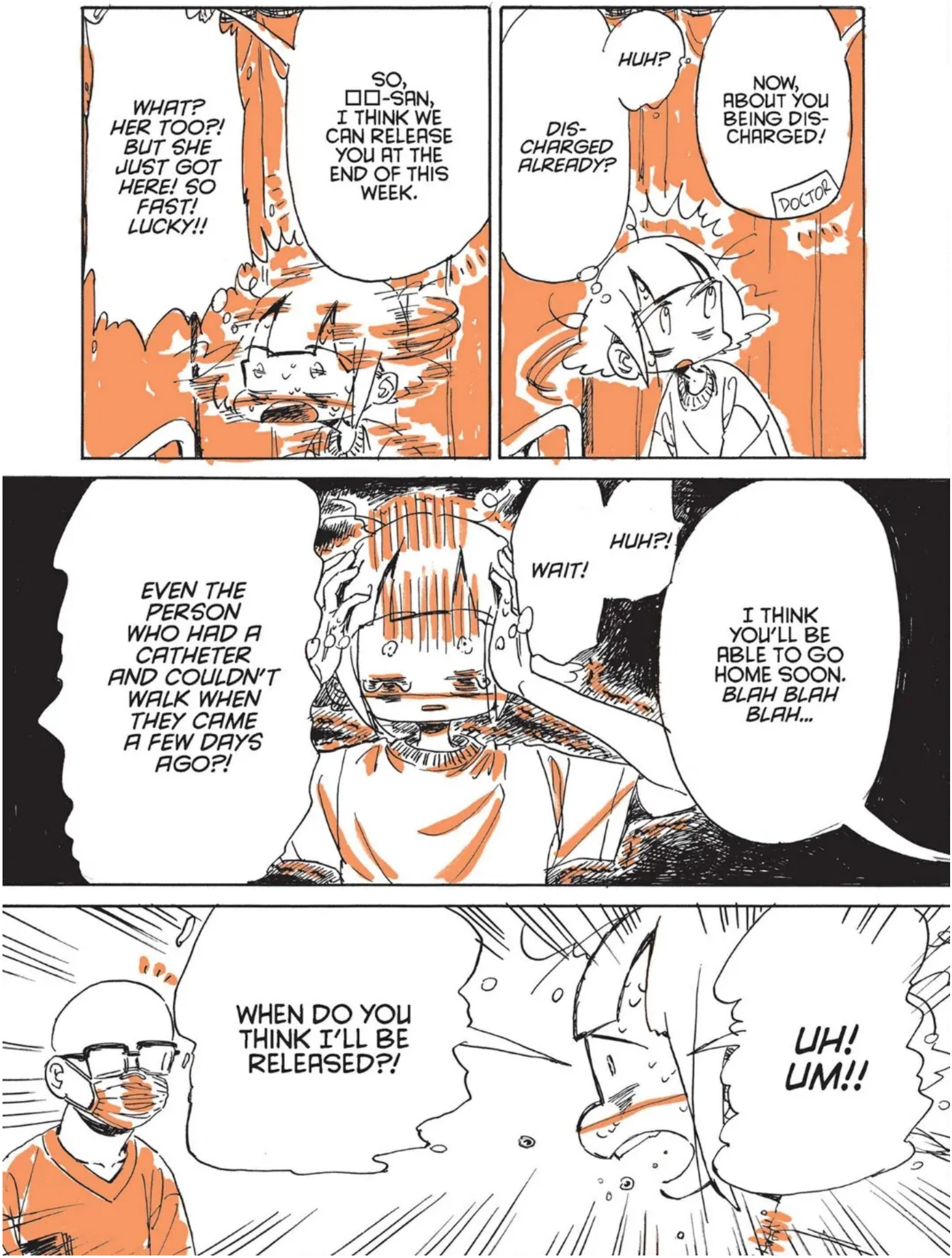

not being able to eat was so hard I cried.
SOB SOB...
KA-CHAK KA-CHAK
GRRRWWL
UNNNH...
WAFT
DELICIOUS SMELLS
Also...
CHOMP CHOMP
I WOULD PERFORM THIS MYSTERIOUS ACT OF SELF-HARM WHERE I'D DELIBERATELY AGONIZE OVER THE MENU POSTED IN THE HALLWAY.
STARE...
GRRR
WWWL
My appetite came back much faster than the last time I was in the hospital, and I was soon hungry.
But even though the sodium and glucose were going into my body, I couldn't taste anything. That made me so sad.
SODIUM... GLUCOSE...
I had four IV infusions a day of one hundred calories each.


This did surprising damage to my mental health.
No matter how hungry I got, I was the only one in the big room who wasn't given meals every day.
Also, living on the IV drip alone made my face and hands dry and flaky.
At mealtimes, I would either hide under my blankets and wait it out, or escape to the lobby on the first floor.
I started noticing this lovely smell.
SNIFF
SNIFF
SMELL OF PEE.
THIS IS THE SMELL OF PEE FROM A PERSON WHO'S EATEN!!!
Plus...
TH-THIS ...!!

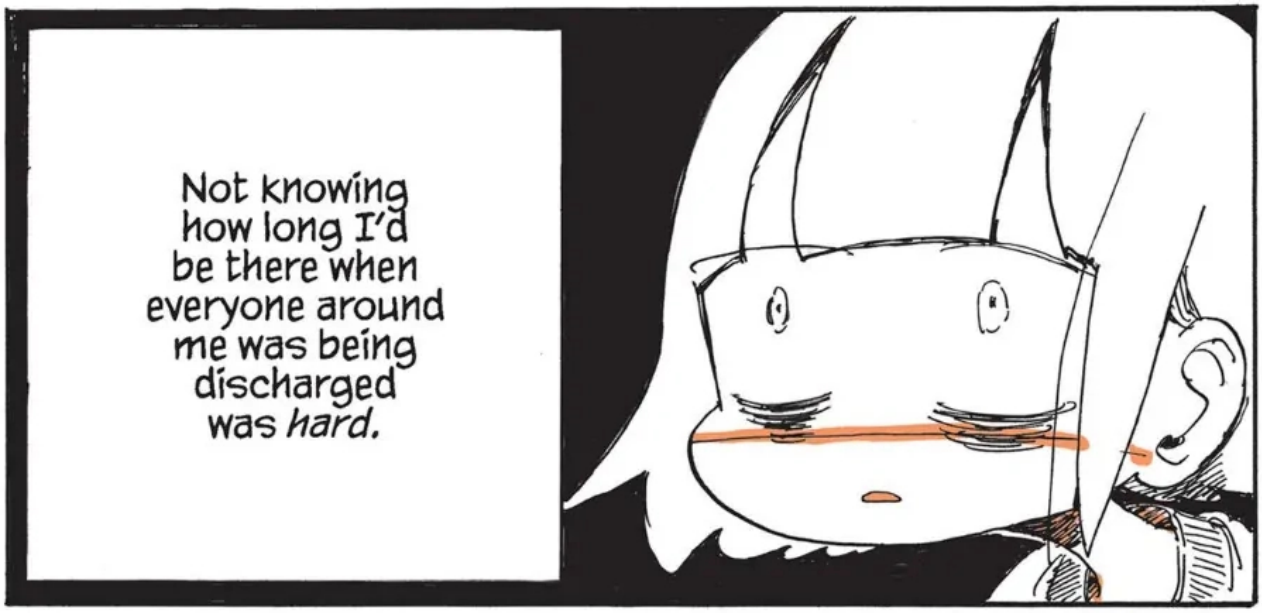

And then there were the delicious leftovers out in the hallway.
I WANTED TO EAT THEM.

OO-SAAAN!
DOCTOR
One more thing that sent me packing...

Not being allowed to eat for four days was also a big factor in my running away.
GLUG GLUG
GLUG GLUG
I FILLED MY STOMACH WITH CARBONATED WATER
SUGAR-FREE


SO, □□-SAN, I THINK WE CAN RELEASE YOU AT THE END OF THIS WEEK.
WHAT? HER TOO?! BUT SHE JUST GOT HERE! SO FAST! LUCKY!!
NOW, ABOUT YOU BEING DIS-CHARGED!
HUH?
DIS-CHARGED ALREADY?
DOCTOR
I THINK YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GO HOME SOON. BLAH BLAH BLAH...
HUH?!
WAIT!
EVEN THE PERSON WHO HAD A CATHETER AND COULDN'T WALK WHEN THEY CAME A FEW DAYS AGO?!
UH! UM!!
WHEN DO YOU THINK I'LL BE RELEASED?!

MM, ANYTHING LESS THAN TWO WEEKS IS UNLIKELY.
HA HA AH
HA!HA

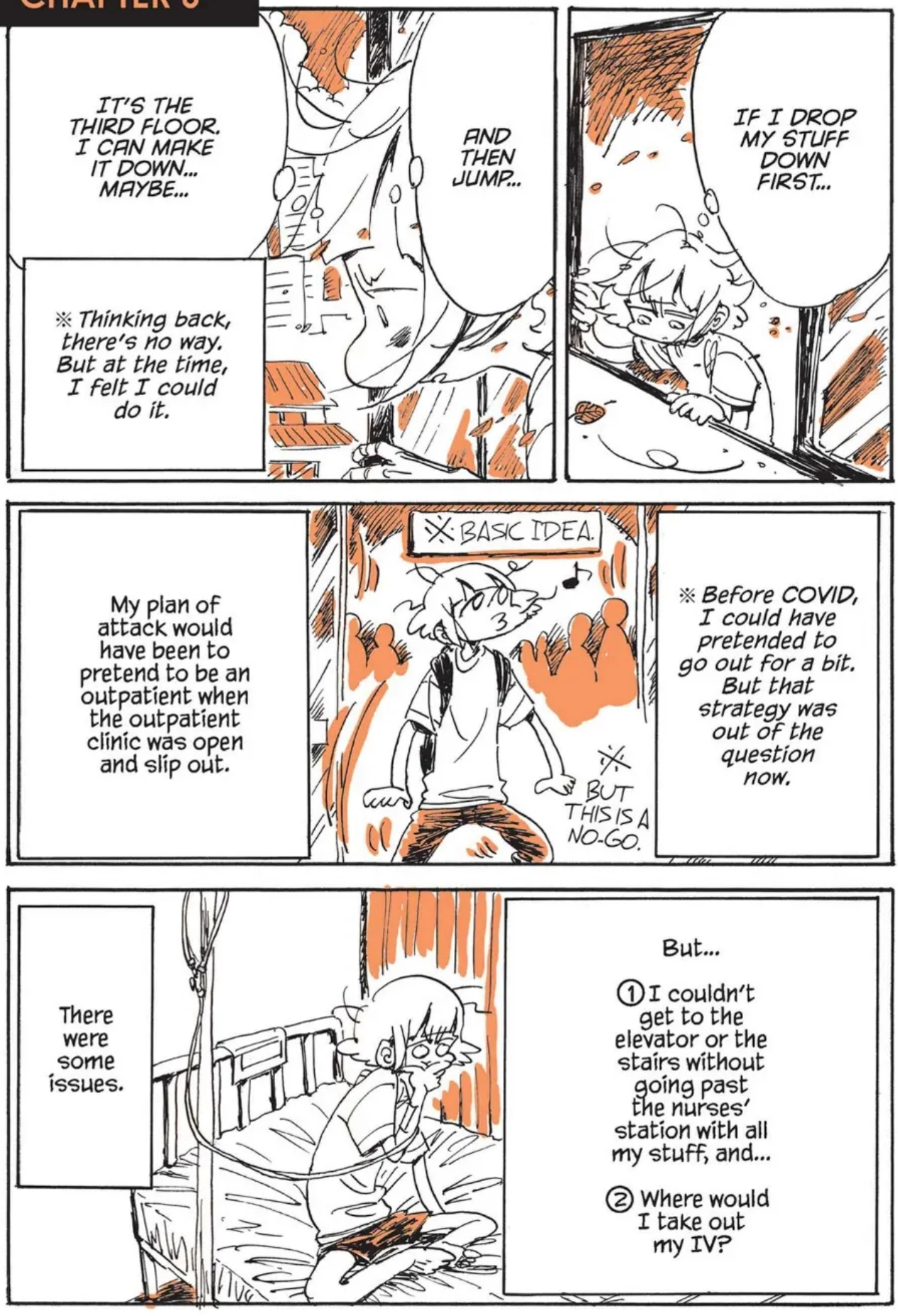

Not knowing how long I'd be there when everyone around me was being discharged was *hard*.

I had to escape at any cost.

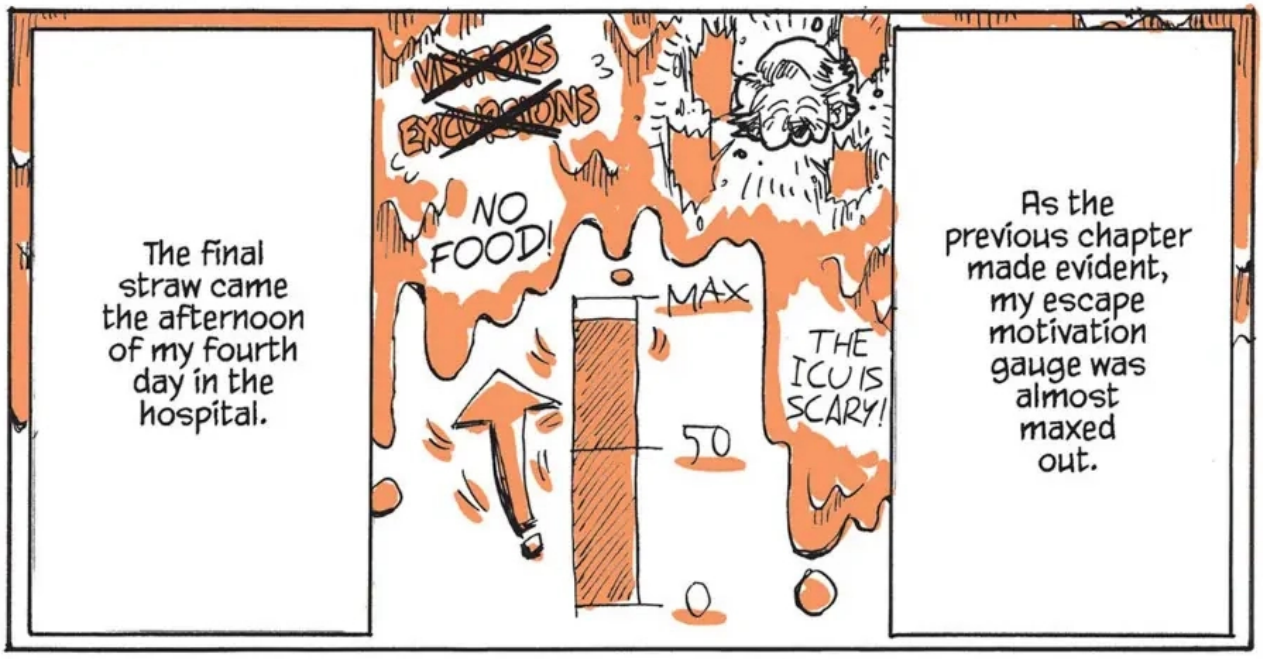
Plus, I was facing being stuck alone in this room with Sonic Boom Granny for weeks on end.
JUST. THE TWO OF US!

My Pancreas Broke
But My Life
Got Better

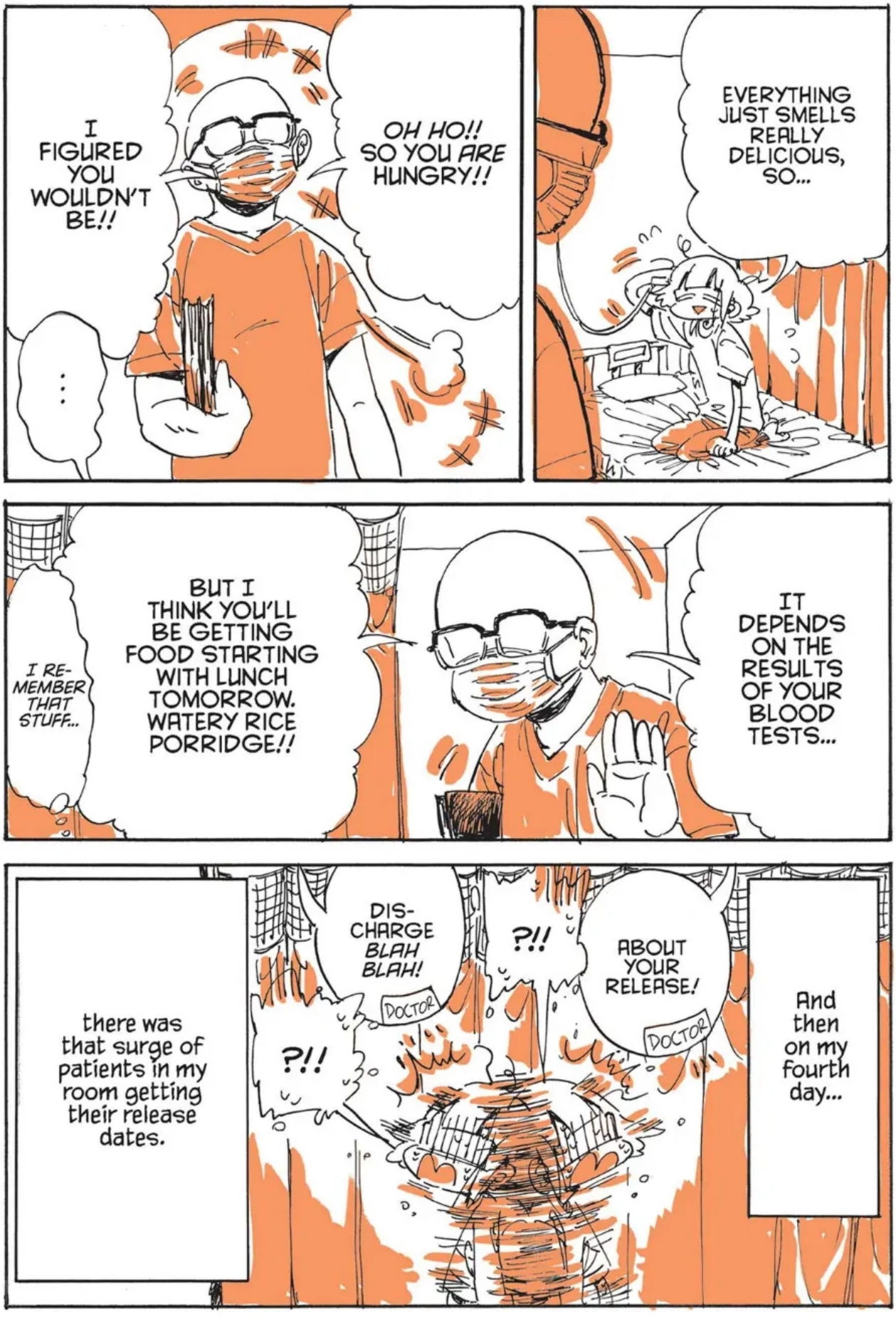
# CHAPTER 6

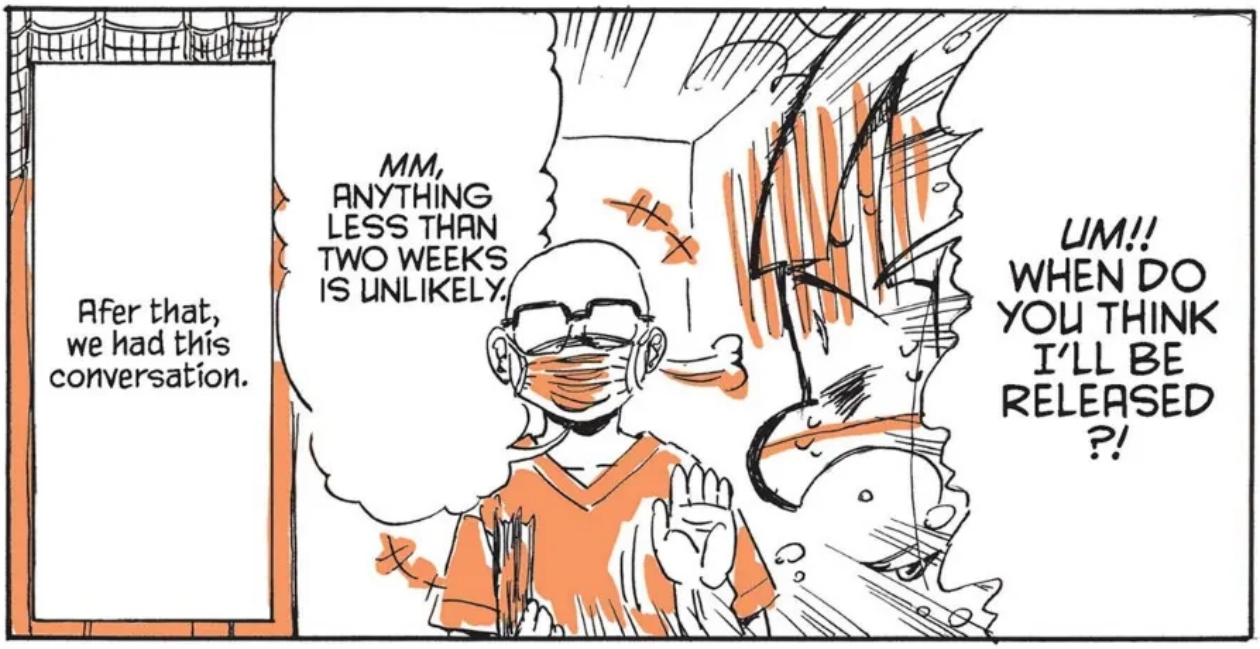

IT'S THE THIRD FLOOR. I CAN MAKE IT DOWN... MAYBE...
※ Thinking back, there's no way. But at the time, I felt I could do it.
AND THEN JUMP...
IF I DROP MY STUFF DOWN FIRST...
My plan of attack would have been to pretend to be an outpatient when the outpatient clinic was open and slip out.
※ BASIC IDEA.
※ BUT THIS IS A NO-GO.
※ Before COVID, I could have pretended to go out for a bit. But that strategy was out of the question now.
There were some issues.
But...
① I couldn't get to the elevator or the stairs without going past the nurses' station with all my stuff, and...
② Where would I take out my IV?

※ Not happening.
MY ONLY OPTION REALLY IS JUMPING!!
I GUESS...


The final straw came the afternoon of my fourth day in the hospital.
VISITORS
EXCURSIONS
NO FOOD!
MAX
50
0
THE ICU IS SCARY!
As the previous chapter made evident, my escape motivation gauge was almost maxed out.

THE PREVIOUS DAY (MY THIRD IN THE HOSPITAL)...
ARE YOU HUNGRY?


I FIGURED YOU WOULDN'T BE!!
OH HO!! SO YOU ARE HUNGRY!!
...
EVERYTHING JUST SMELLS REALLY DELICIOUS, SO...
I RE-MEMBER THAT STUFF...
BUT I THINK YOU'LL BE GETTING FOOD STARTING WITH LUNCH TOMORROW. WATERY RICE PORRIDGE!!
IT DEPENDS ON THE RESULTS OF YOUR BLOOD TESTS...
there was that surge of patients in my room getting their release dates.
DIS-CHARGE BLAH BLAH!
DOCTOR
?!!
?!!
ABOUT YOUR RELEASE!
DOCTOR
And then on my fourth day...




A RETURN TO EATING!

FOOD

And then *it* arrived.

STEWED CARROTS, POTATO, AND PEAS

BROCCOLI, CARROT, AND CHICKEN BREAST SALAD

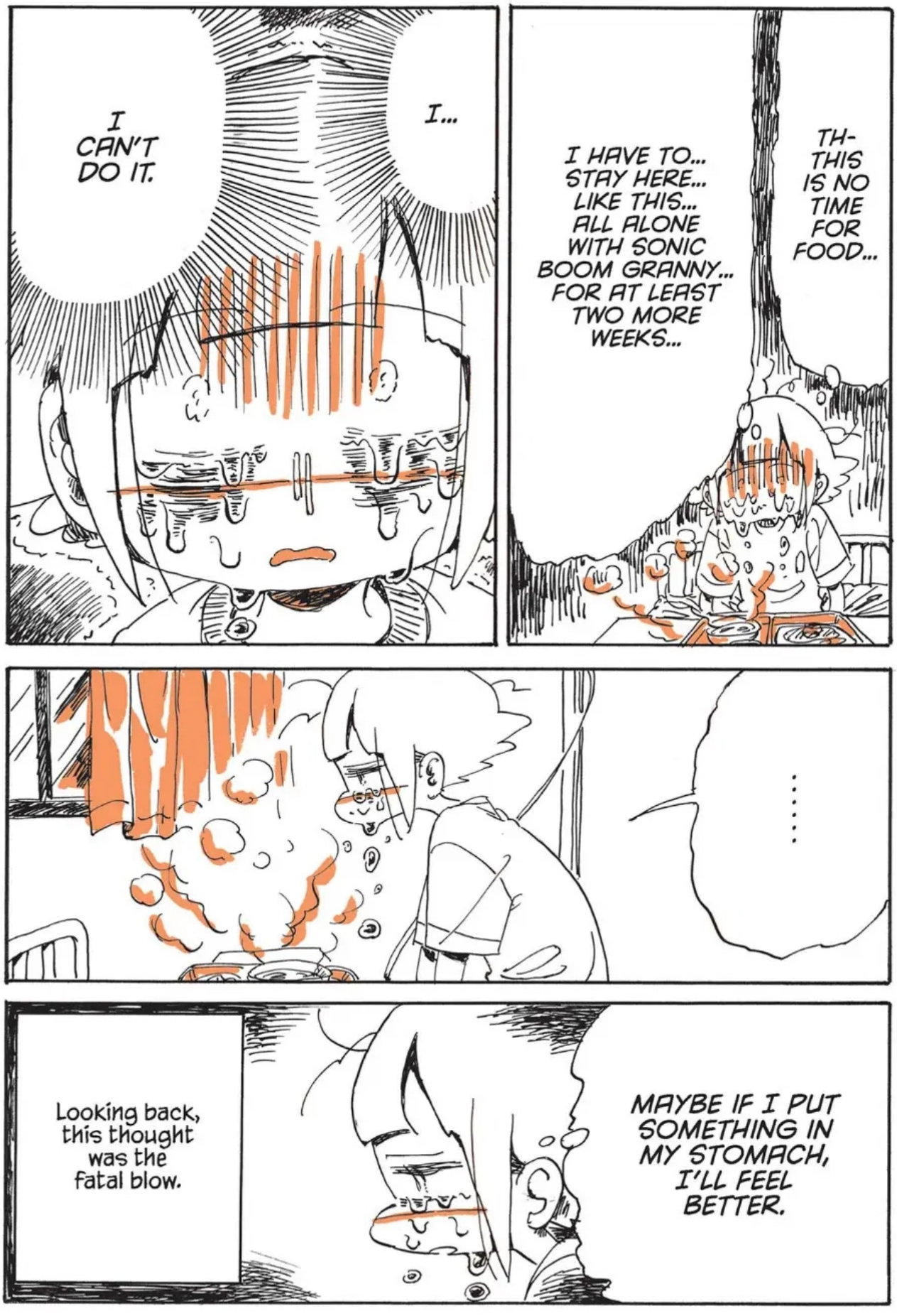
WATERY RICE PORRIDGE

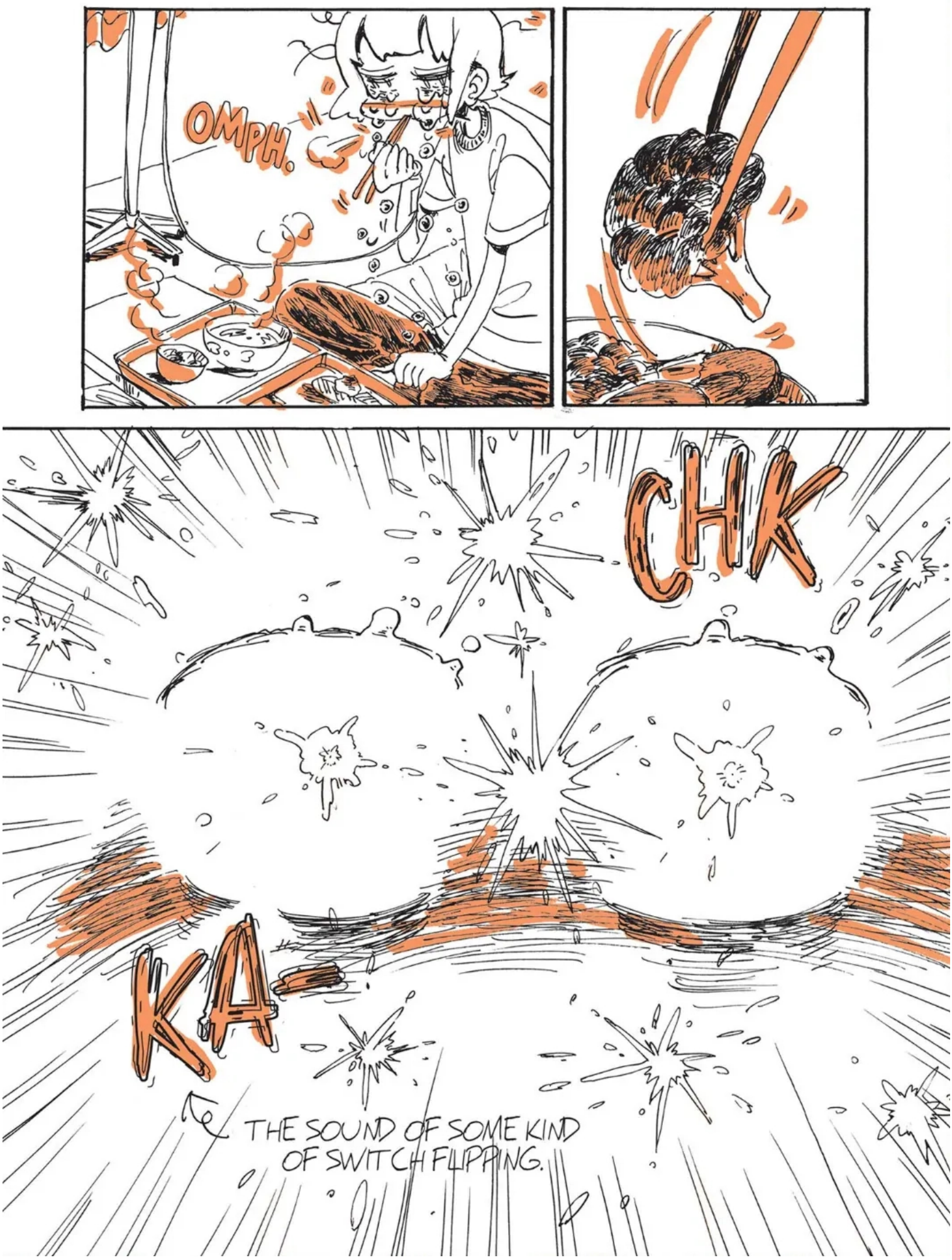
SPINACH

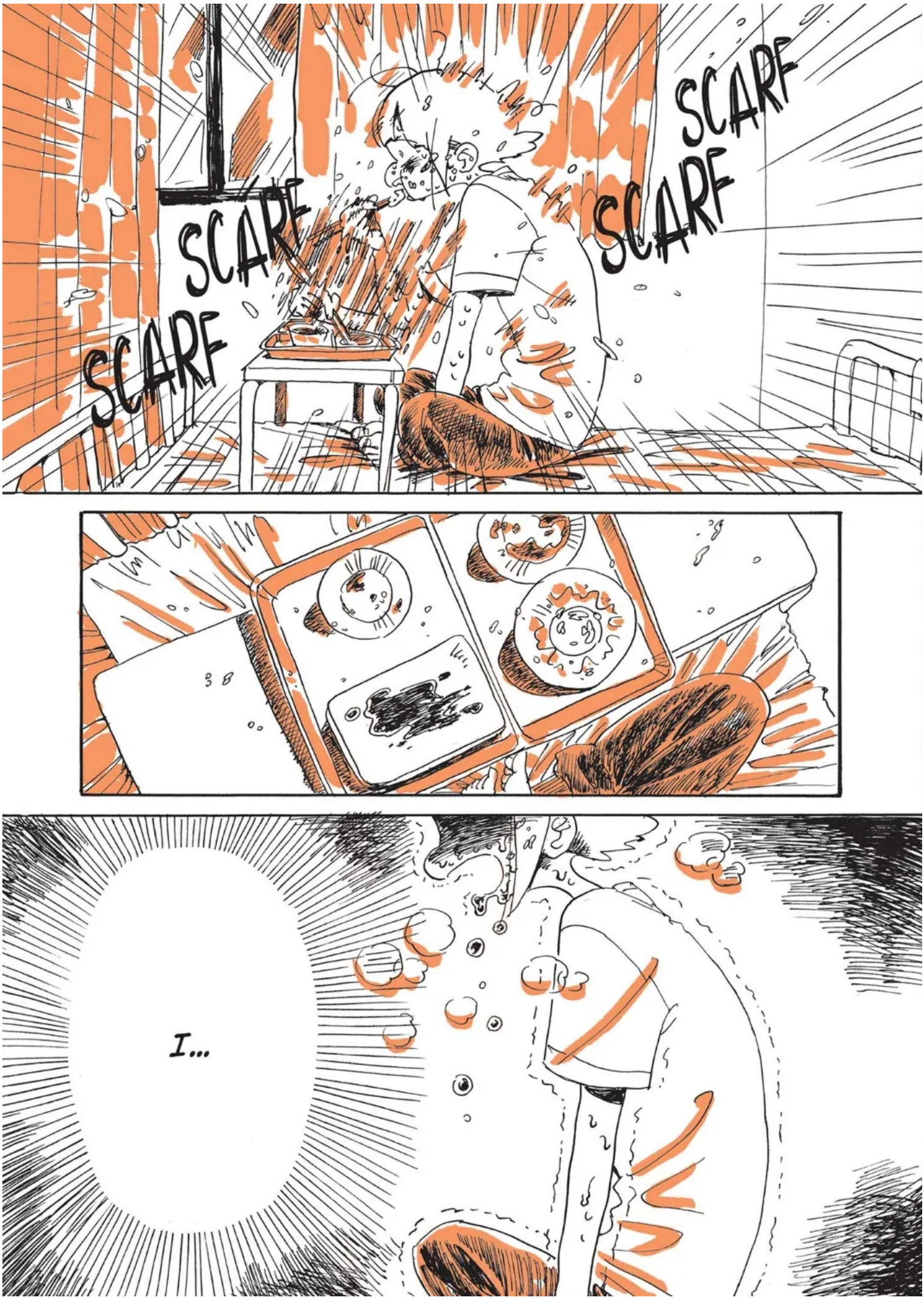
CARROT

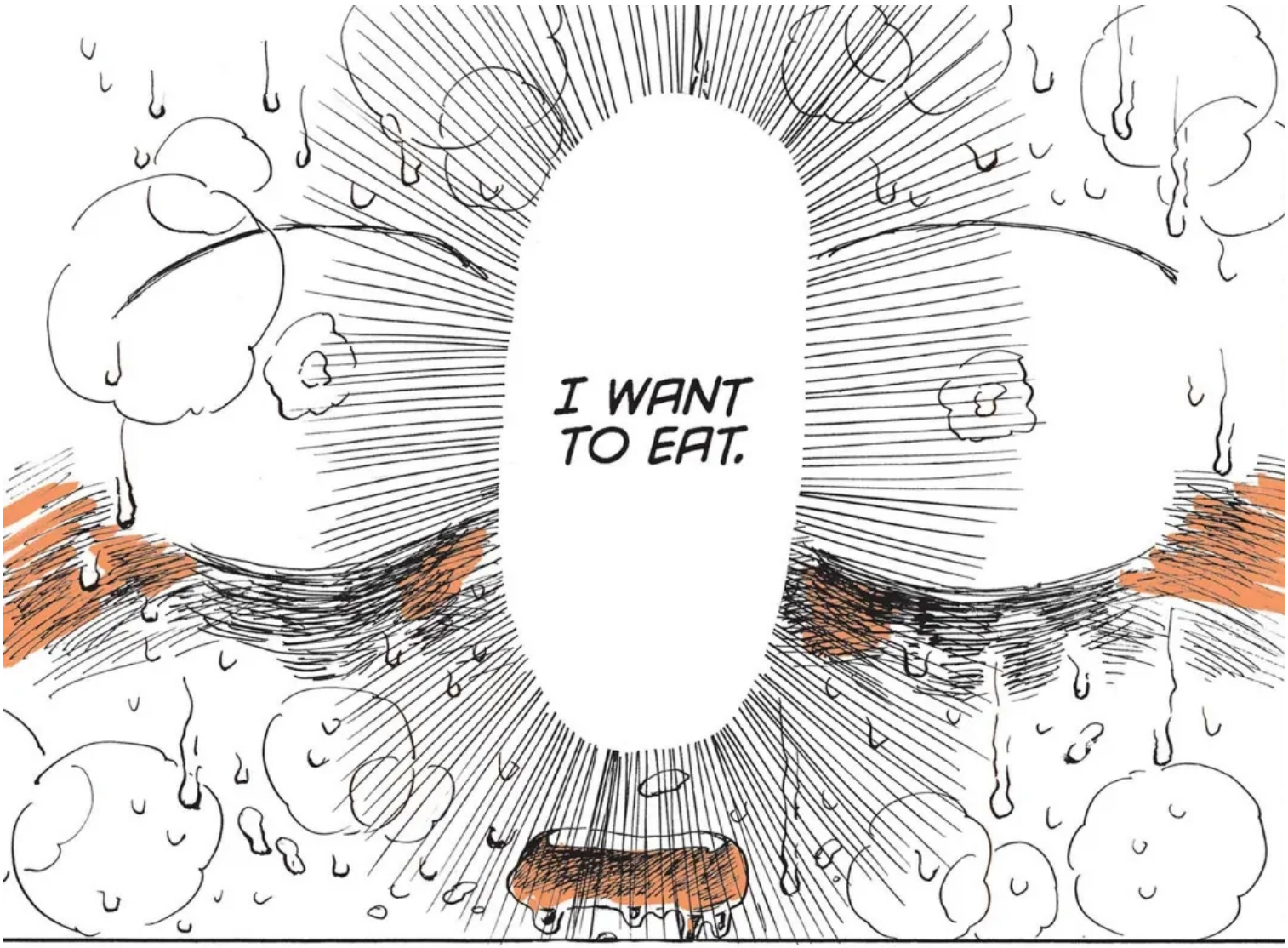
GRATED DAIKON

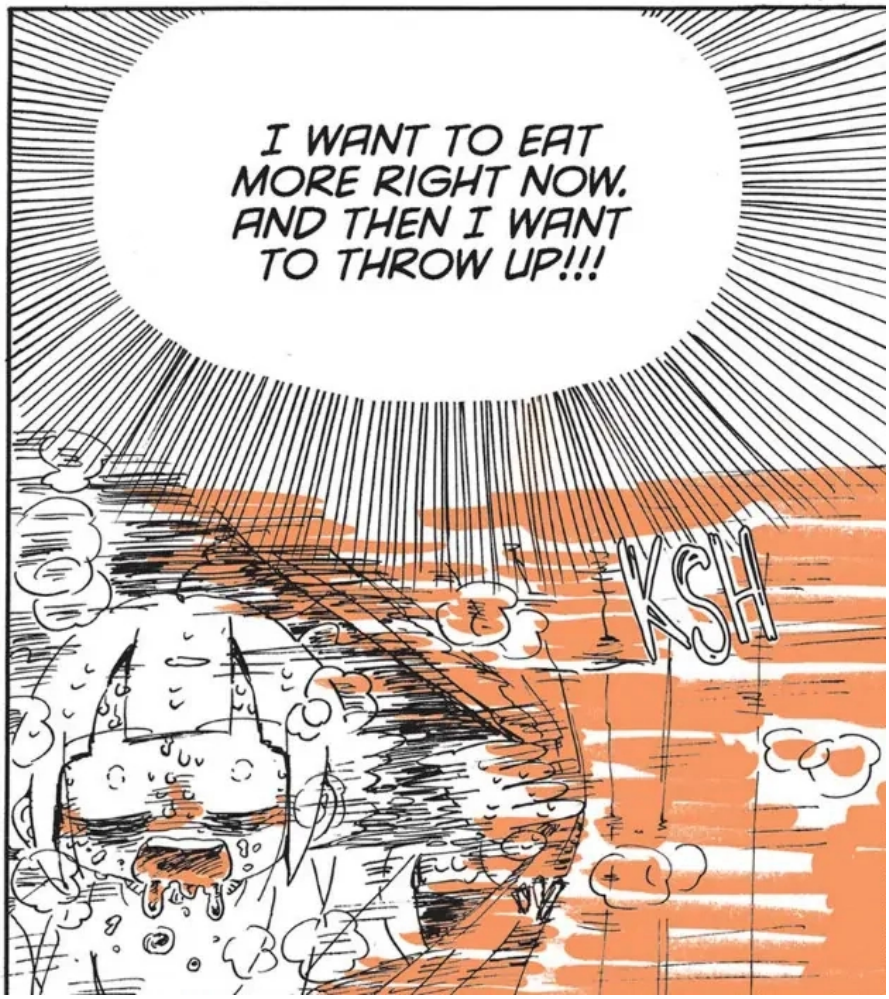
CHICKEN BREAST

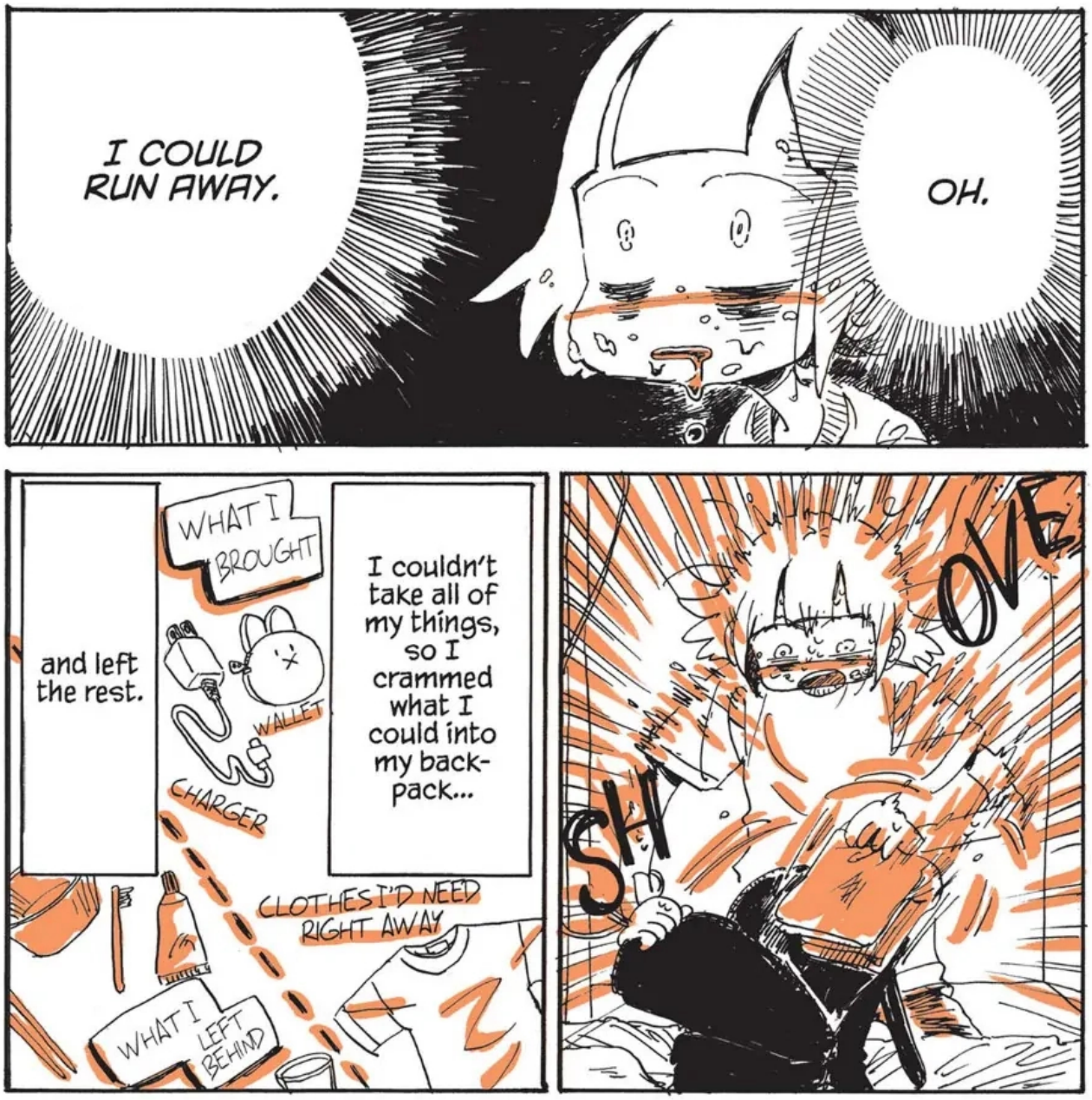

I CAN'T DO IT.
I...
I HAVE TO... STAY HERE... LIKE THIS... ALL ALONE WITH SONIC BOOM GRANNY... FOR AT LEAST TWO MORE WEEKS...
TH-THIS IS NO TIME FOR FOOD...
.....
Looking back, this thought was the fatal blow.
MAYBE IF I PUT SOMETHING IN MY STOMACH, I'LL FEEL BETTER.

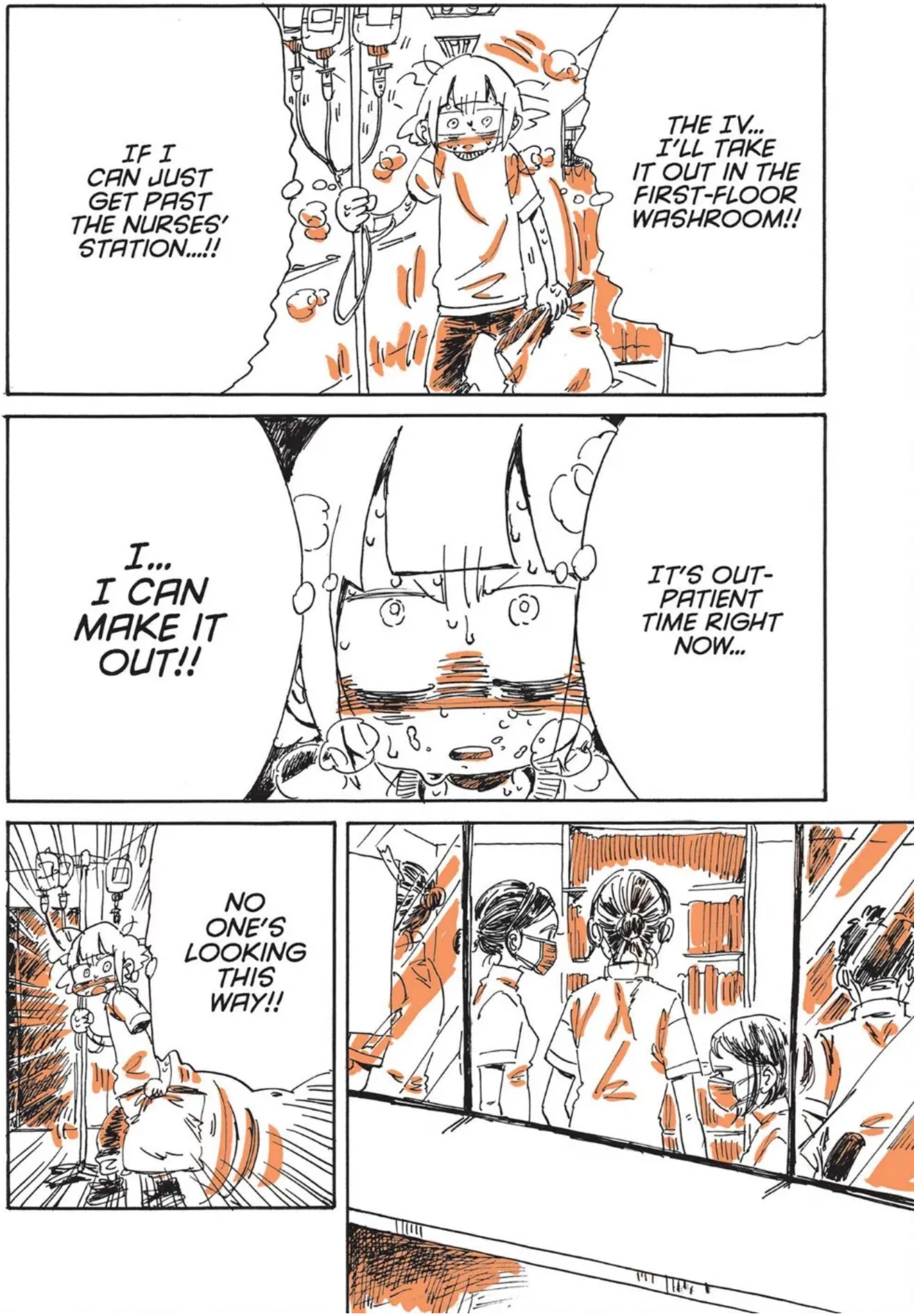

OMPH.
CHK
KA
THE SOUND OF SOME KIND OF SWITCH FLIPPING.

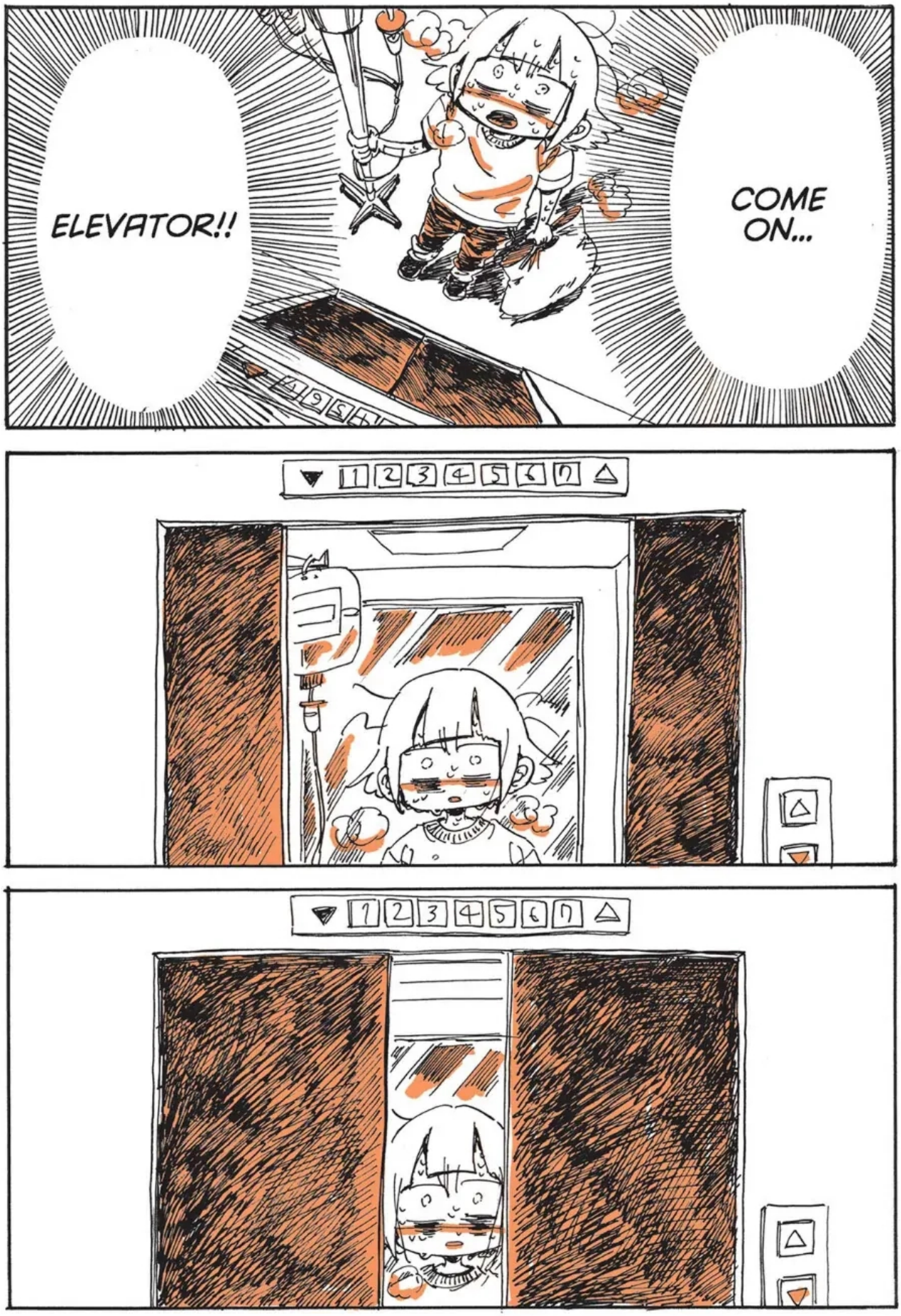

SCARF
SCARF
SCARF
SCARF
I...

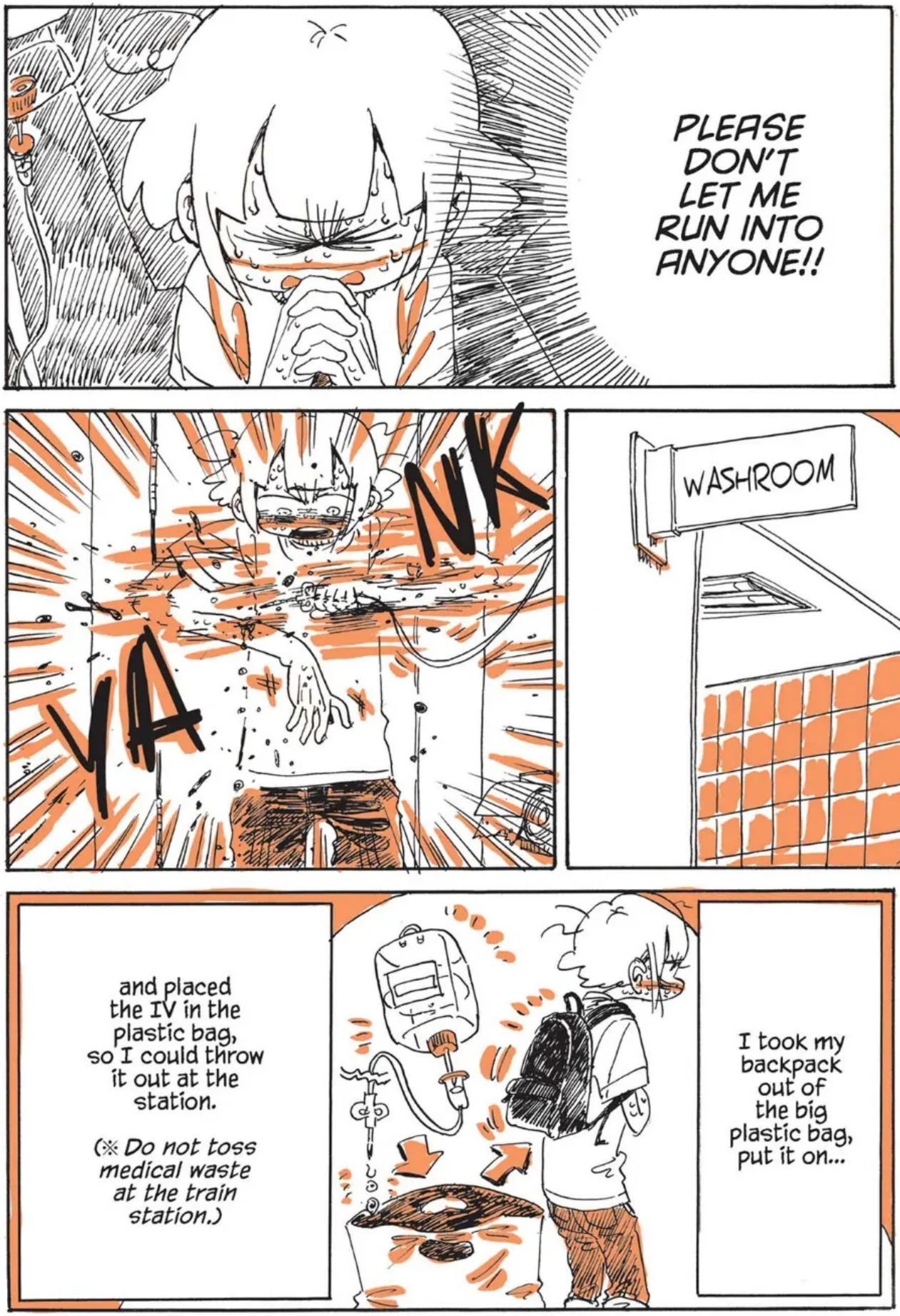

I WANT TO EAT.

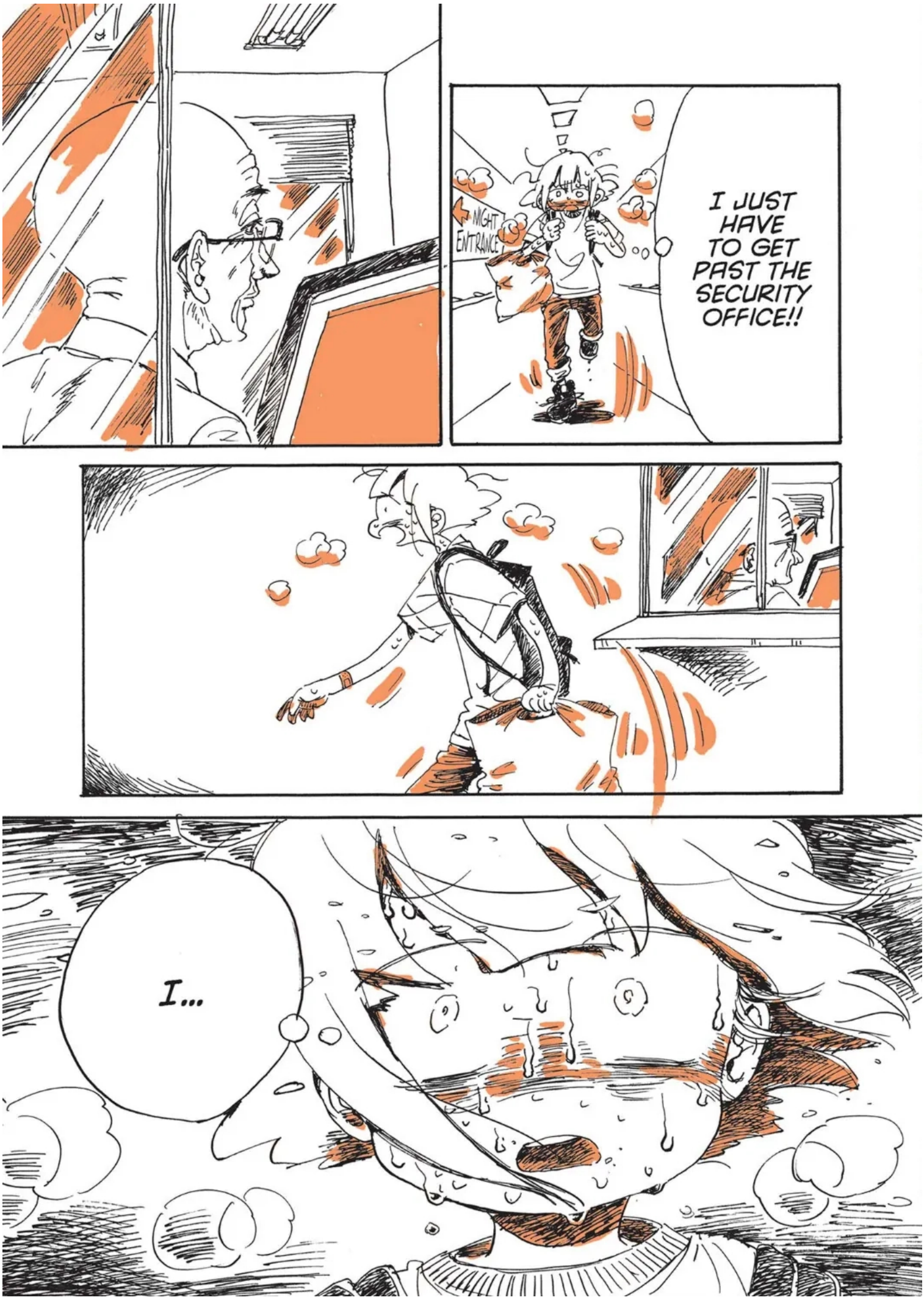

I WANT TO EAT MORE RIGHT NOW. AND THEN I WANT TO THROW UP!!!
KSH

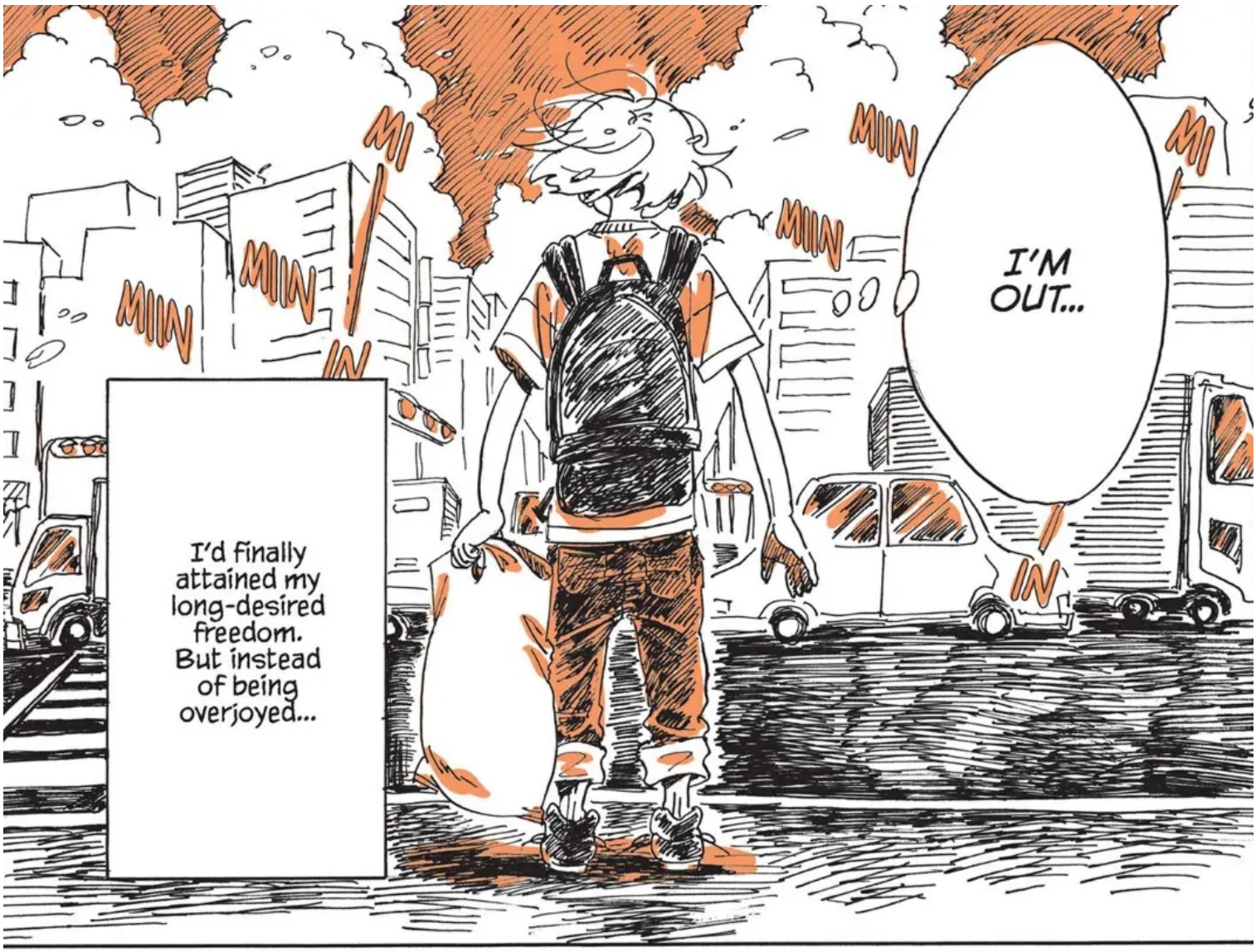

I COULD RUN AWAY.
OH.
and left the rest.
WHAT I BROUGHT
WALLET
CHARGER
I couldn't take all of my things, so I crammed what I could into my back-pack...
CLOTHES I'D NEED RIGHT AWAY
WHAT I LEFT BEHIND
OVE
SH
With my backpack concealed in a large plastic bag, I stepped out of my room.

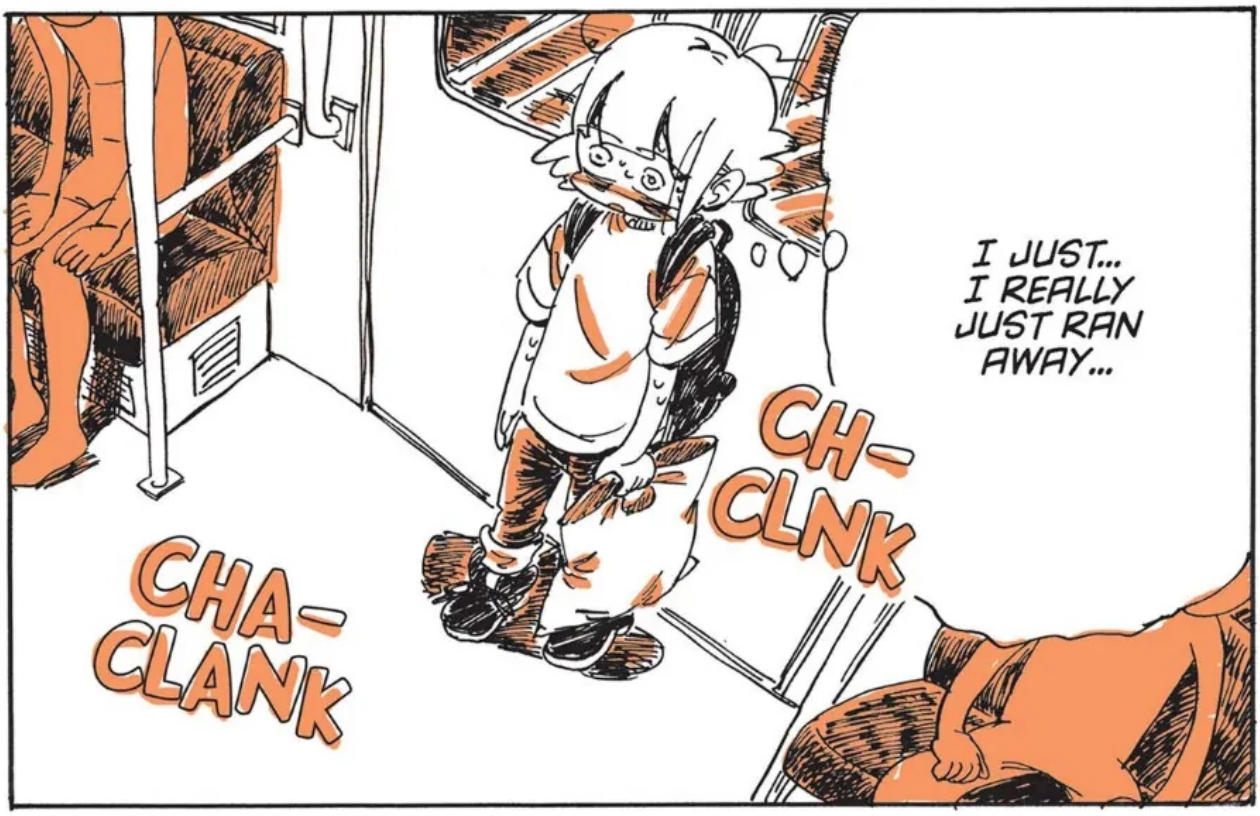

IF I CAN JUST GET PAST THE NURSES' STATION...!!
THE IV... I'LL TAKE IT OUT IN THE FIRST-FLOOR WASHROOM!!
I... I CAN MAKE IT OUT!!
IT'S OUT-PATIENT TIME RIGHT NOW...
NO ONE'S LOOKING THIS WAY!!


ELEVATOR!!
COME ON...

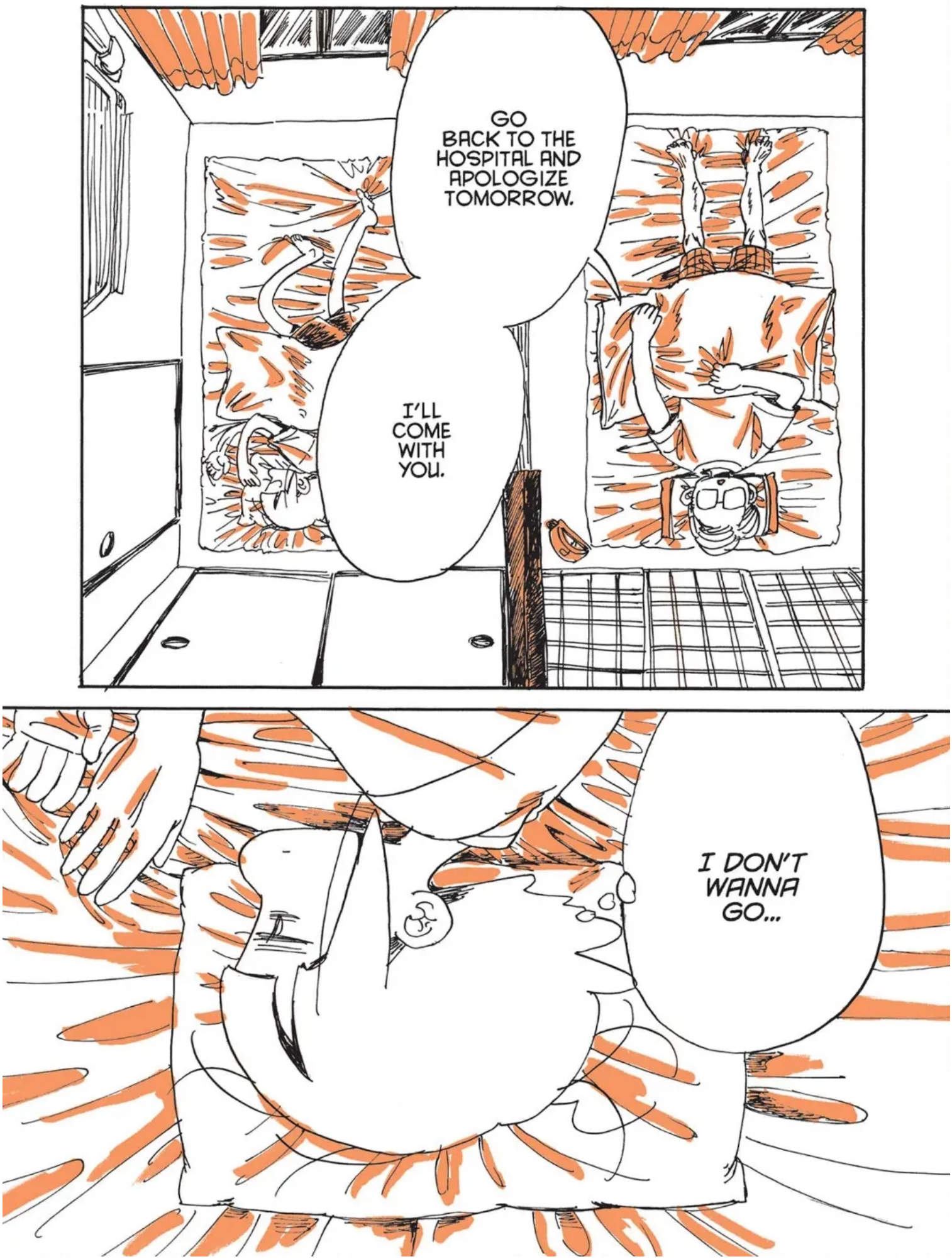

PLEASE DON'T LET ME RUN INTO ANYONE!!
YA
NK
WASHROOM
and placed the IV in the plastic bag, so I could throw it out at the station.
(※ Do not toss medical waste at the train station.)
I took my backpack out of the big plastic bag, put it on...

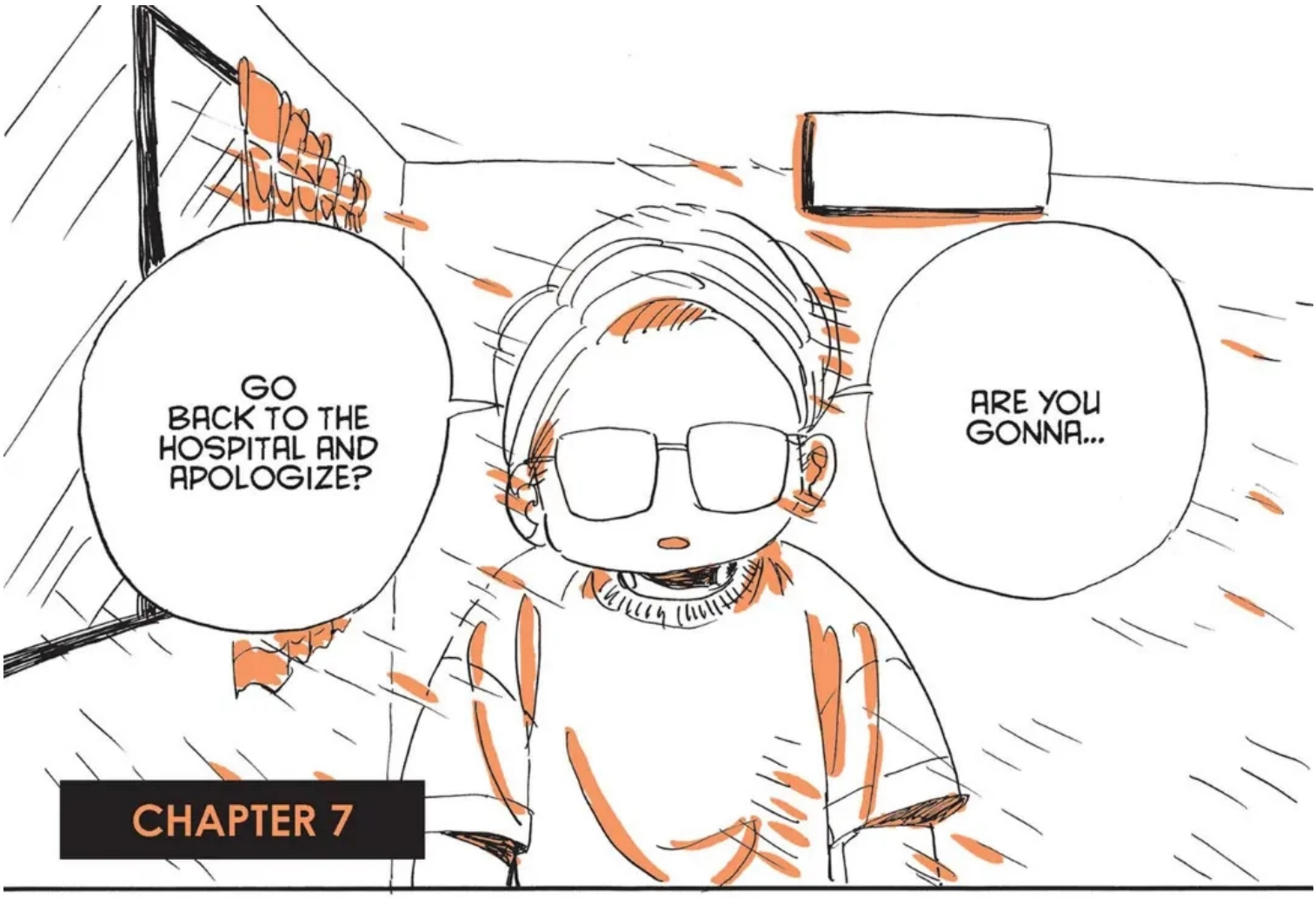

NIGHT ENTRANCE
I JUST HAVE TO GET PAST THE SECURITY OFFICE!!
I...

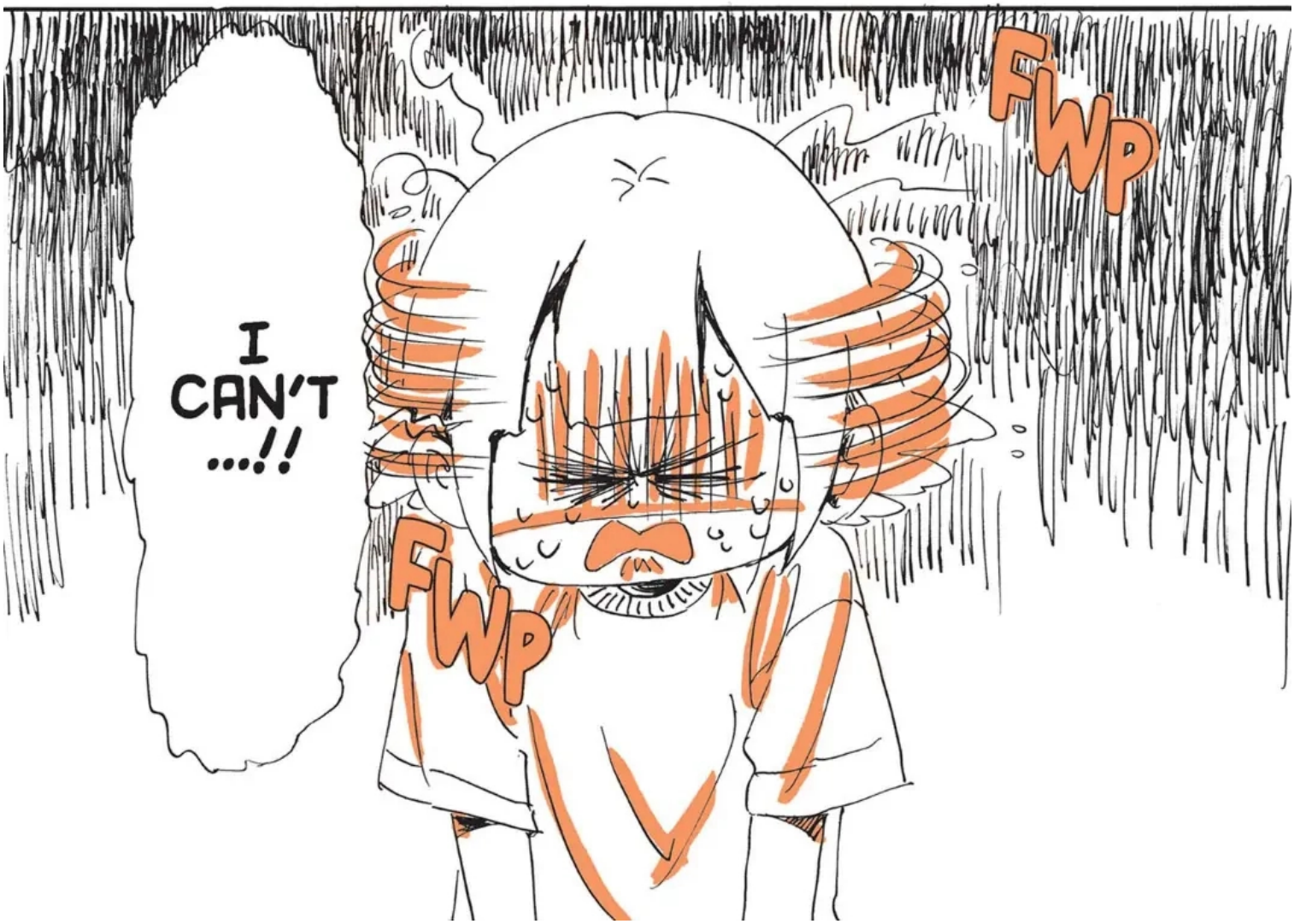

I'd finally attained my long-desired freedom. But instead of being overjoyed...
MIIN
MIIN
MIIN
MIIN
I'M OUT...

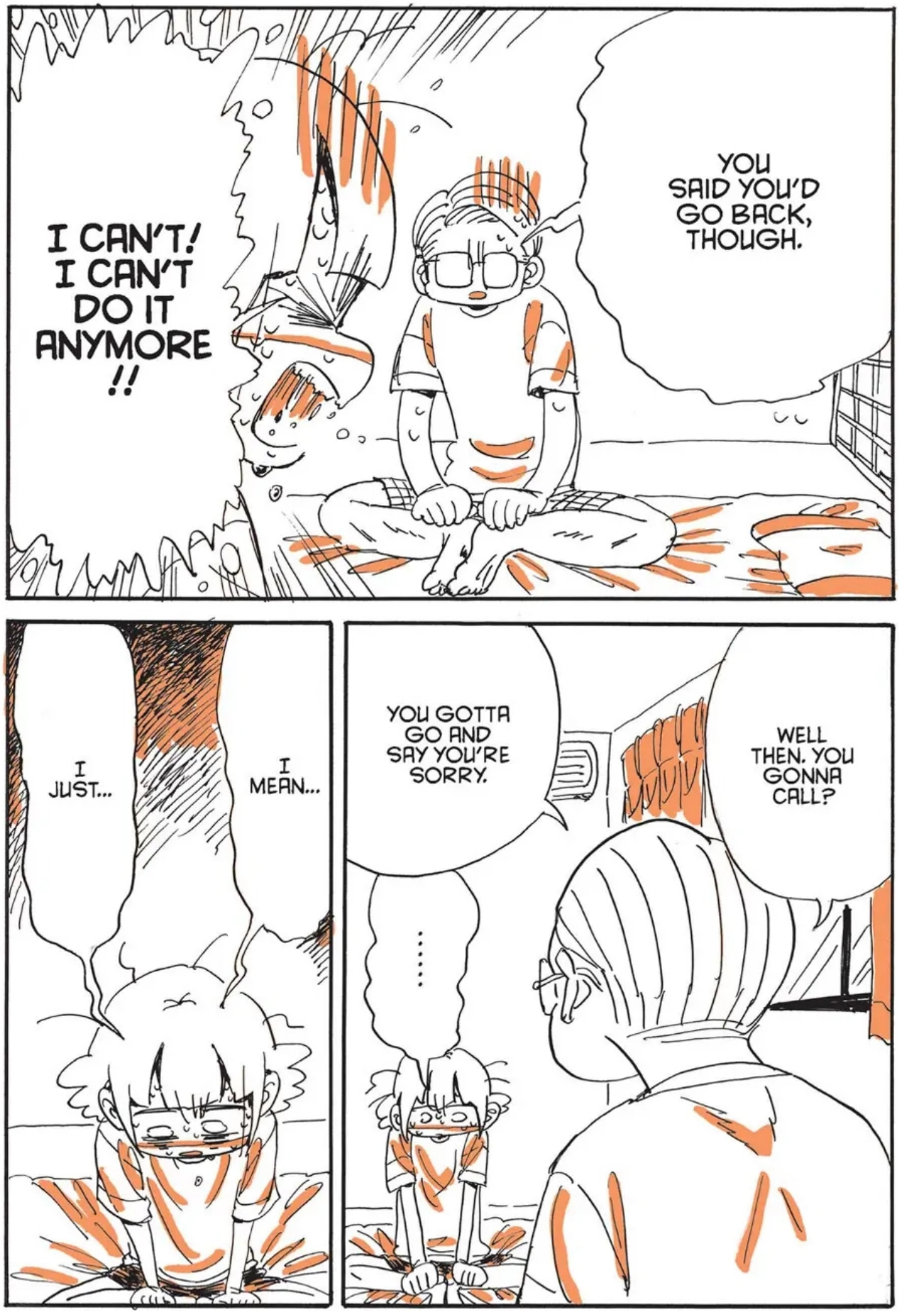

I JUST... I REALLY JUST RAN AWAY...
CH-CLNK
CHA-CLANK

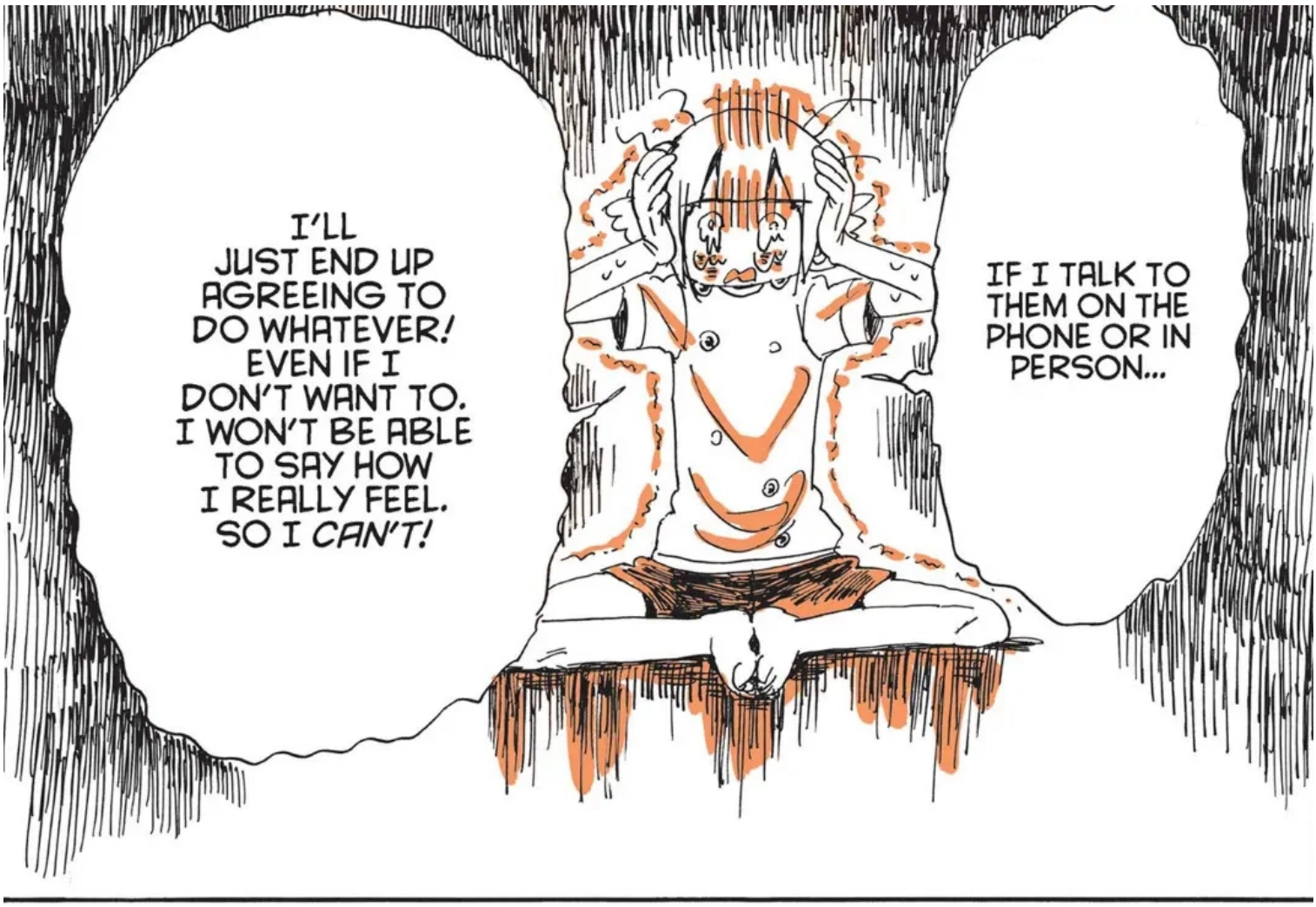
I was overcome with anxiety.
CH-CLANK
SO NOW WHAT...?
CH-CLNK
I RAN AWAY.
READ
I sent a text to my mom on the train...
After the back and forth with the hospital, I went to my parents' place.
CONVENIENCE STORE
24
24
HOSPITAL
PARENTS' HOUSE
HOME
What happened after that is in the prologue. I picked up some food at the convenience store and went home.

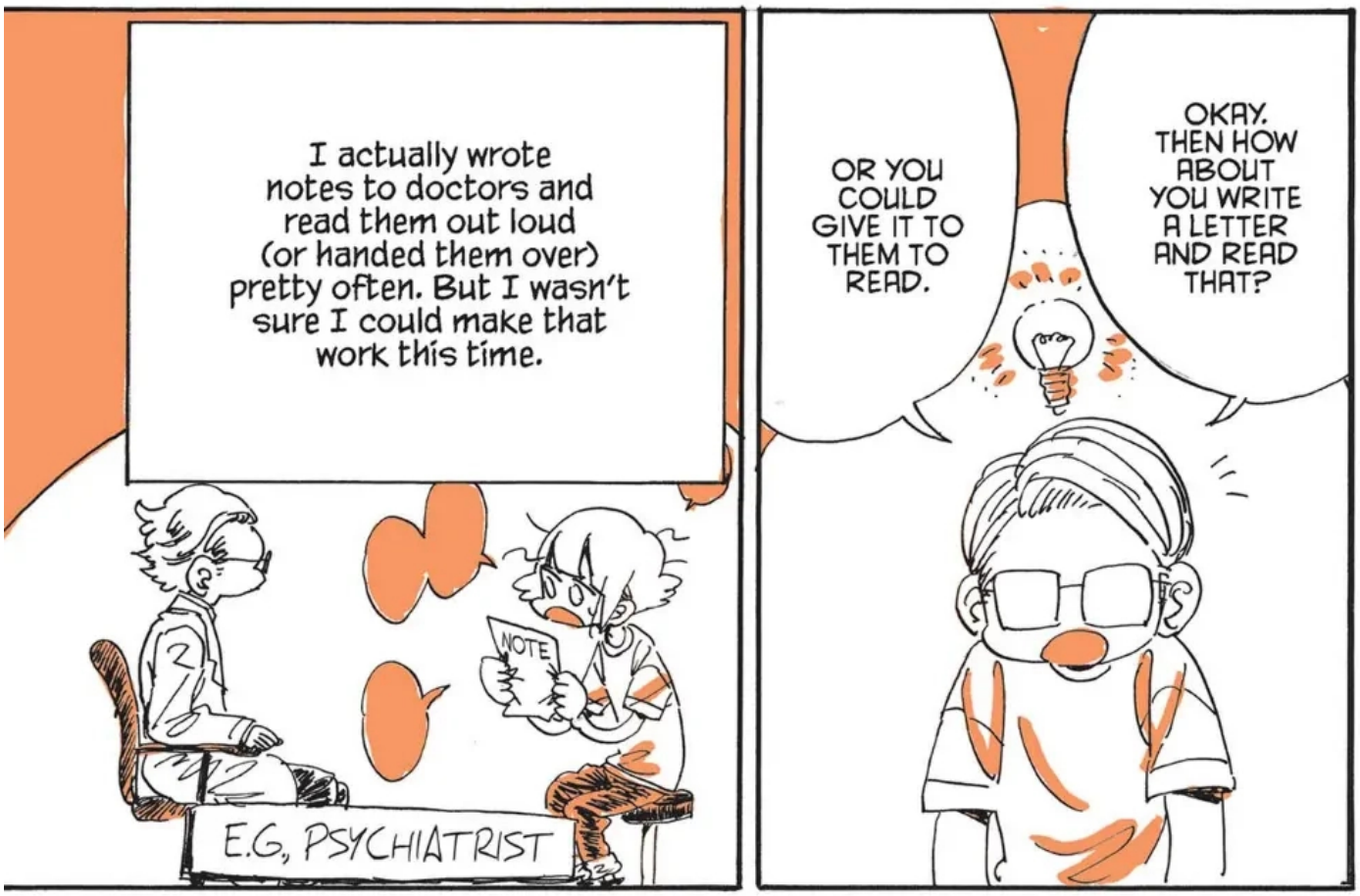

GO BACK TO THE HOSPITAL AND APOLOGIZE TOMORROW.
I'LL COME WITH YOU.
I DON'T WANNA GO...


GO BACK TO THE HOSPITAL AND APOLOGIZE?
ARE YOU GONNA...
CHAPTER 7

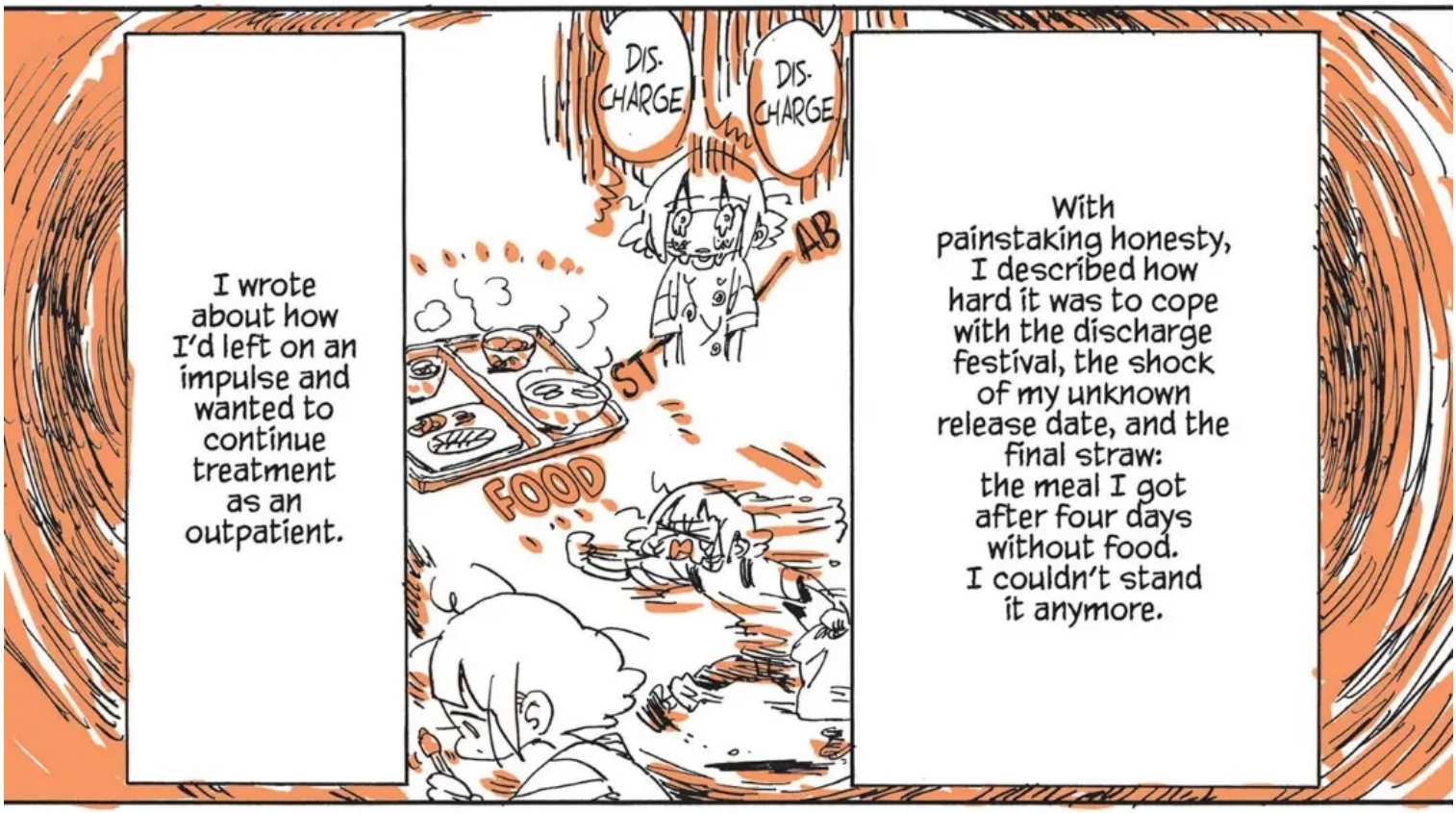

I CAN'T ...!!
FWP
FWP


I CAN'T! I CAN'T DO IT ANYMORE !!
YOU SAID YOU'D GO BACK, THOUGH.
I JUST...
I MEAN...
YOU GOTTA GO AND SAY YOU'RE SORRY.
.....
WELL THEN. YOU GONNA CALL?

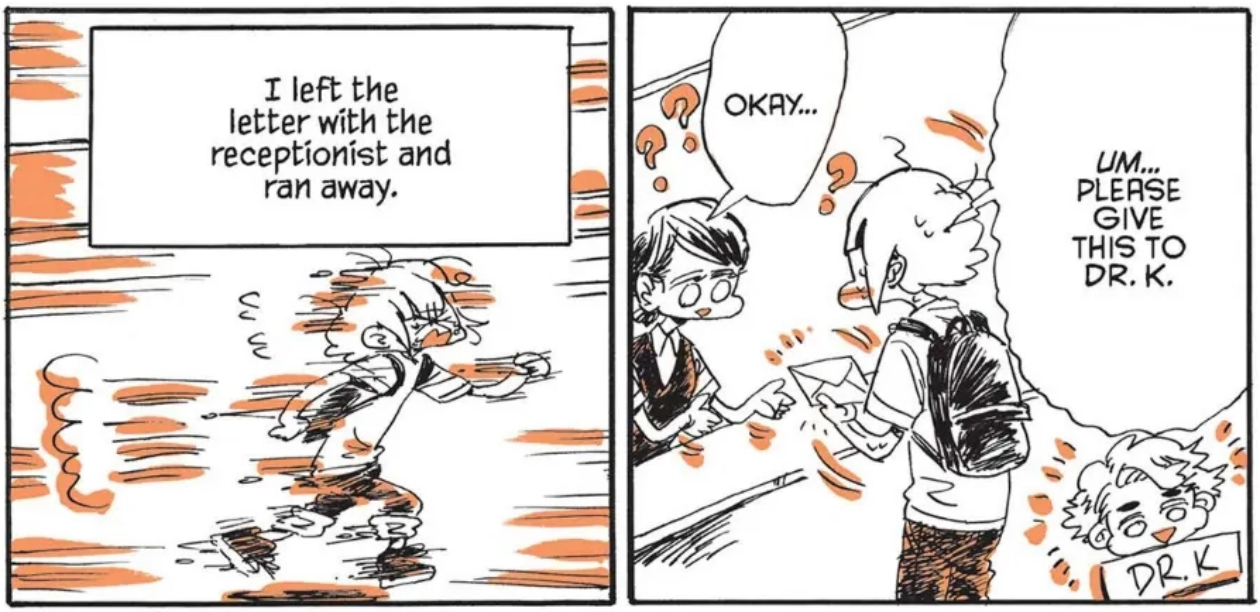

I'LL JUST END UP AGREEING TO DO WHATEVER! EVEN IF I DON'T WANT TO. I WON'T BE ABLE TO SAY HOW I REALLY FEEL. SO I CAN'T!
IF I TALK TO THEM ON THE PHONE OR IN PERSON...


I actually wrote notes to doctors and read them out loud (or handed them over) pretty often. But I wasn't sure I could make that work this time.
NOTE
E.G., PSYCHIATRIST
OR YOU COULD GIVE IT TO THEM TO READ.
OKAY. THEN HOW ABOUT YOU WRITE A LETTER AND READ THAT?

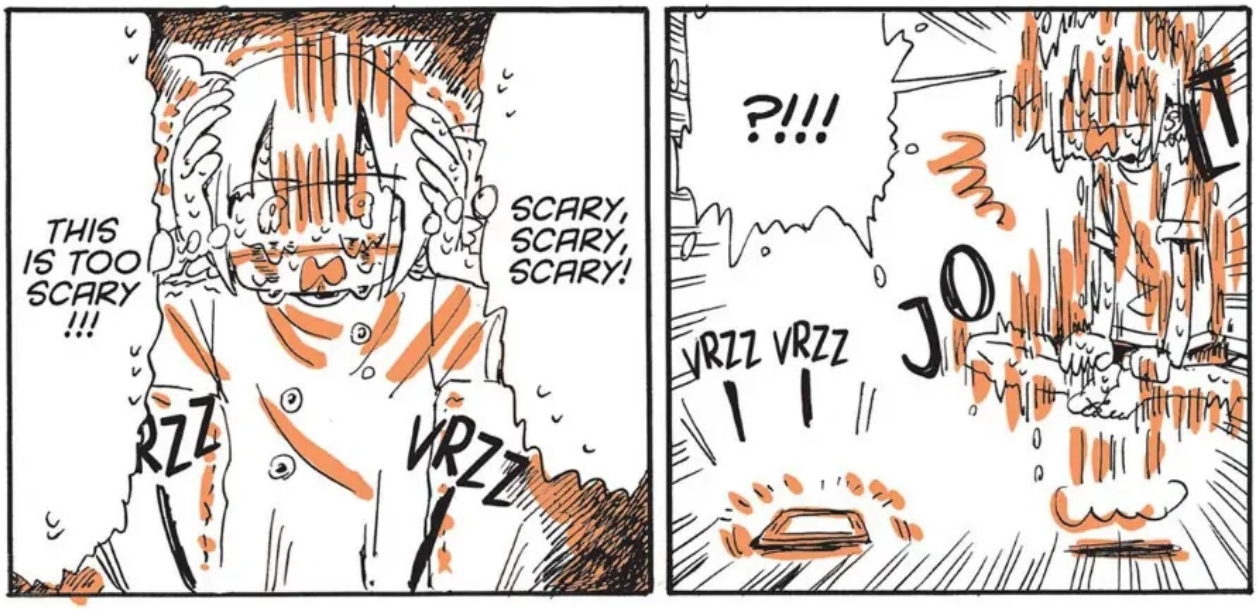
I went back to my place to write it.
Even so, we decided that I'd write my feelings in a letter and give it to the doctor.

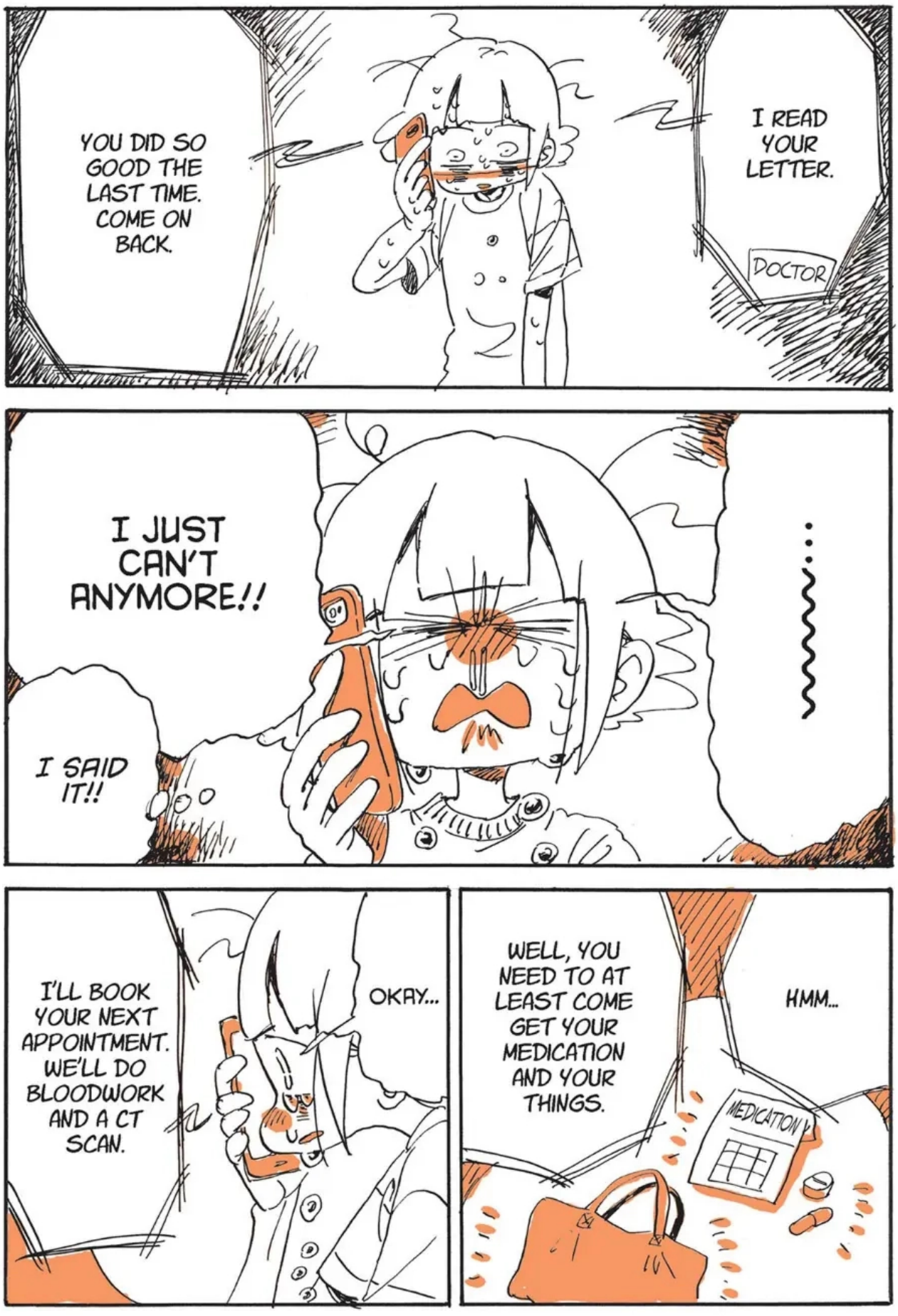

I wrote about how I'd left on an impulse and wanted to continue treatment as an outpatient.
DIS-CHARGE
DIS-CHARGE
AB
ST
FOOD
With painstaking honesty, I described how hard it was to cope with the discharge festival, the shock of my unknown release date, and the final straw: the meal I got after four days without food. I couldn't stand it anymore.

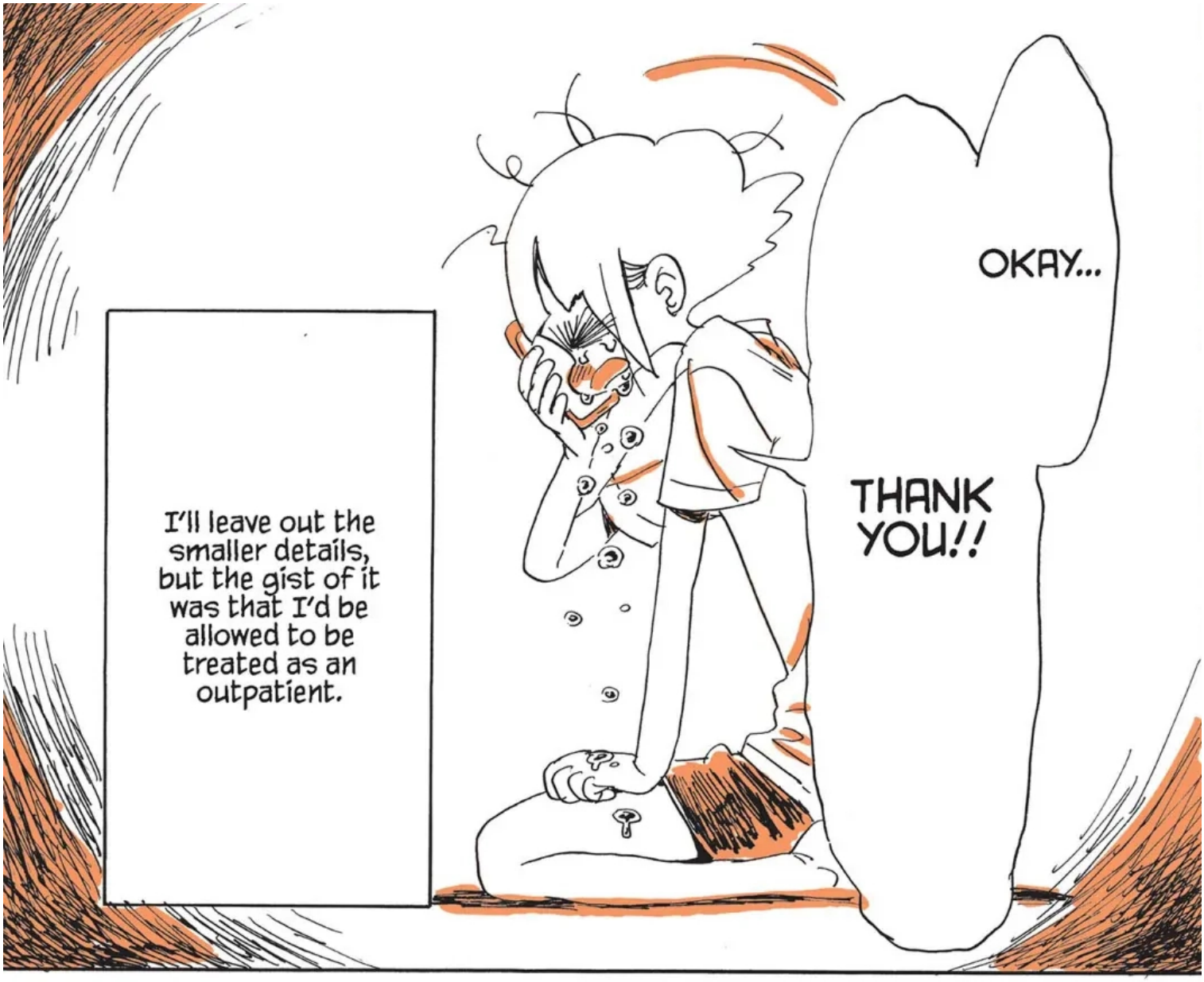
AAAAAH!! I DON'T WANT TO RUN INTO ANYONE!!
And then I went to the hospital...

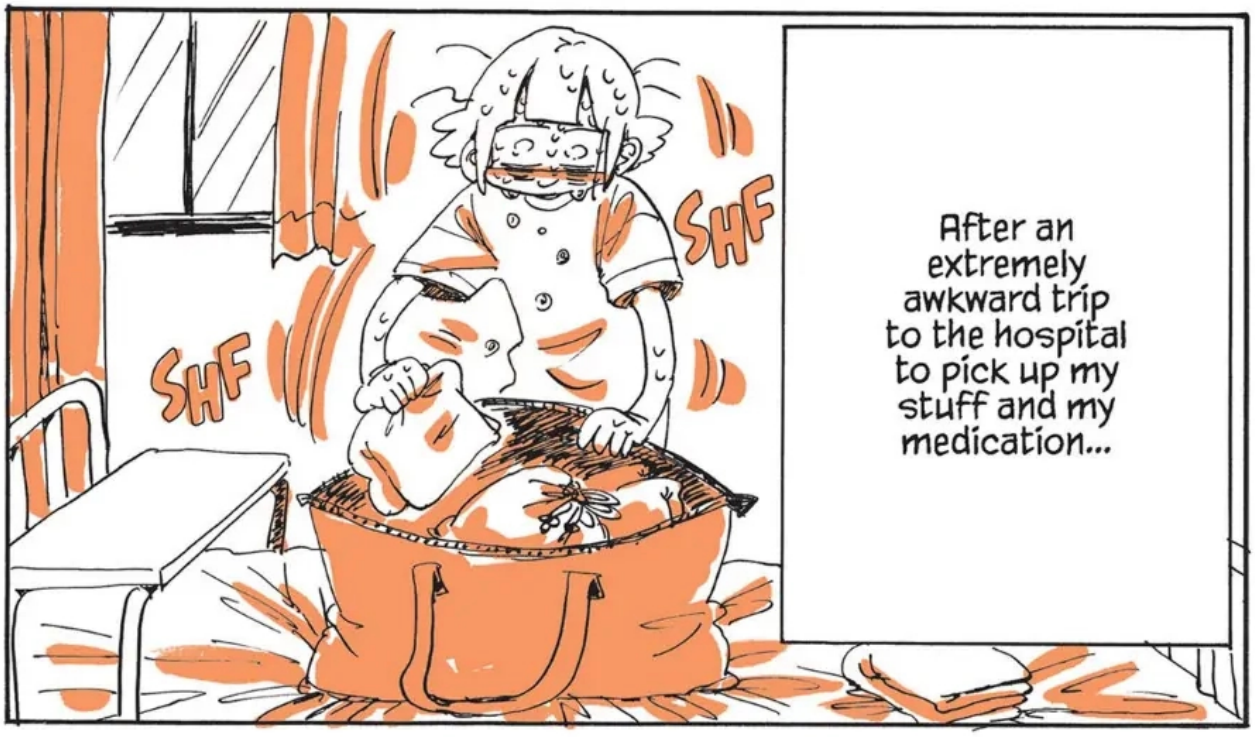

I left the letter with the receptionist and ran away.
OKAY...
UM... PLEASE GIVE THIS TO DR. K.
DR. K

VRZZ
CALL
VRZZ
PA


THIS IS TOO SCARY !!!
SCARY, SCARY, SCARY!
RZZ
VRZZ
?!!!
VRZZ VRZZ
JO


YOU DID SO GOOD THE LAST TIME. COME ON BACK.
I READ YOUR LETTER.
DOCTOR
I JUST CAN'T ANYMORE!!
I SAID IT!!
……
I'LL BOOK YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT. WE'LL DO BLOODWORK AND A CT SCAN.
OKAY...
WELL, YOU NEED TO AT LEAST COME GET YOUR MEDICATION AND YOUR THINGS.
HMM...
MEDICATION


I'll leave out the smaller details, but the gist of it was that I'd be allowed to be treated as an outpatient.
OKAY...
THANK YOU!!

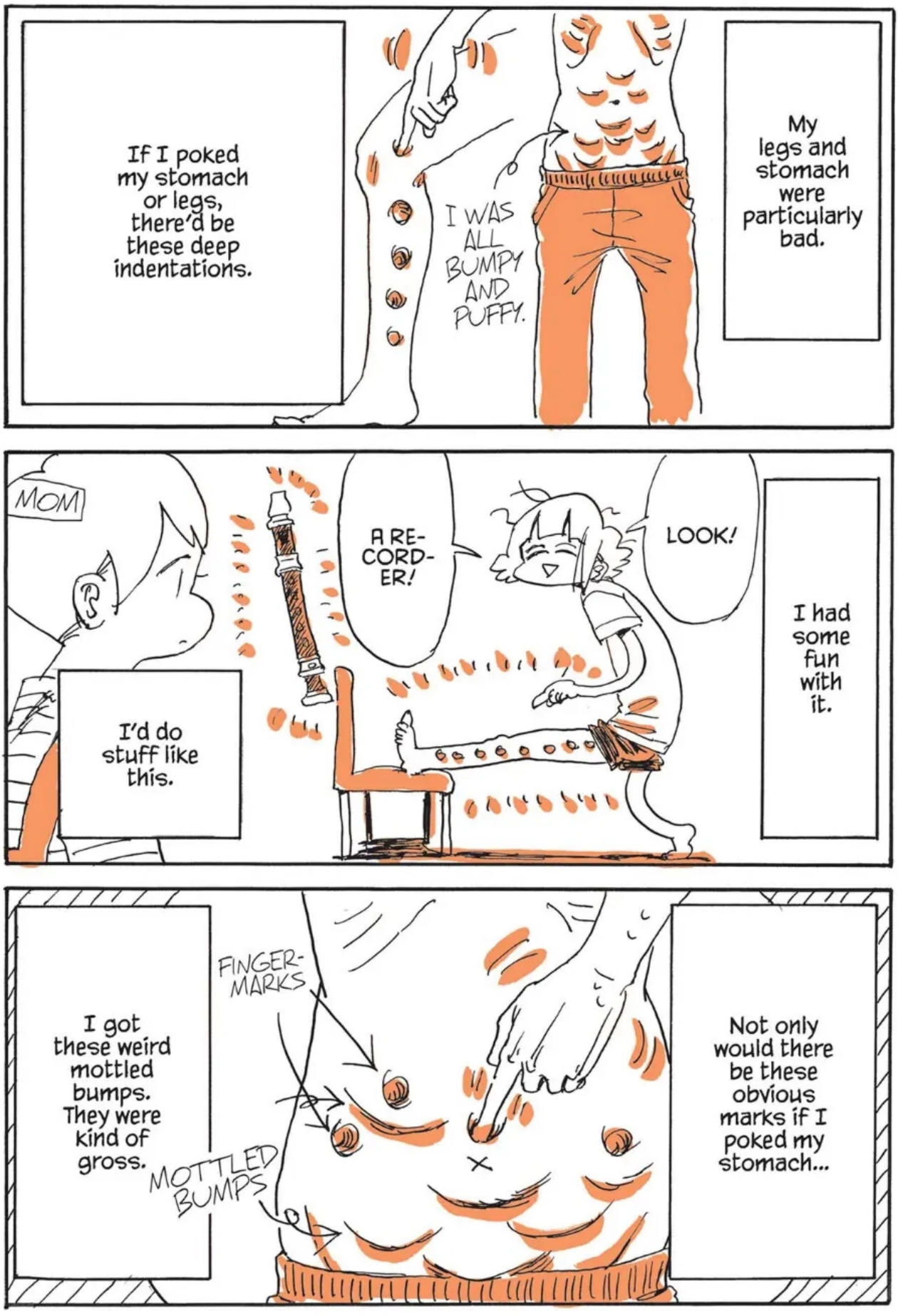

SHF
SHF
After an extremely awkward trip to the hospital to pick up my stuff and my medication...

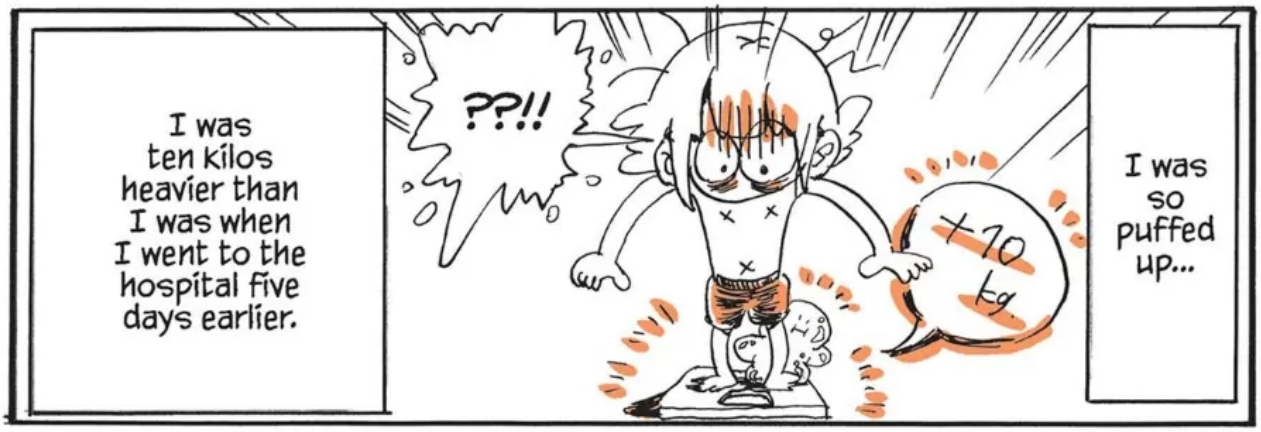
thanks to the fact I had pancreatitis. But it was my fault I had it in the first place! So my self-sabotage was coming back to bite me... on top of the flare-up I'd brought upon myself.

I started a life of carrying around a bomb of guilt and a bad aftertaste...

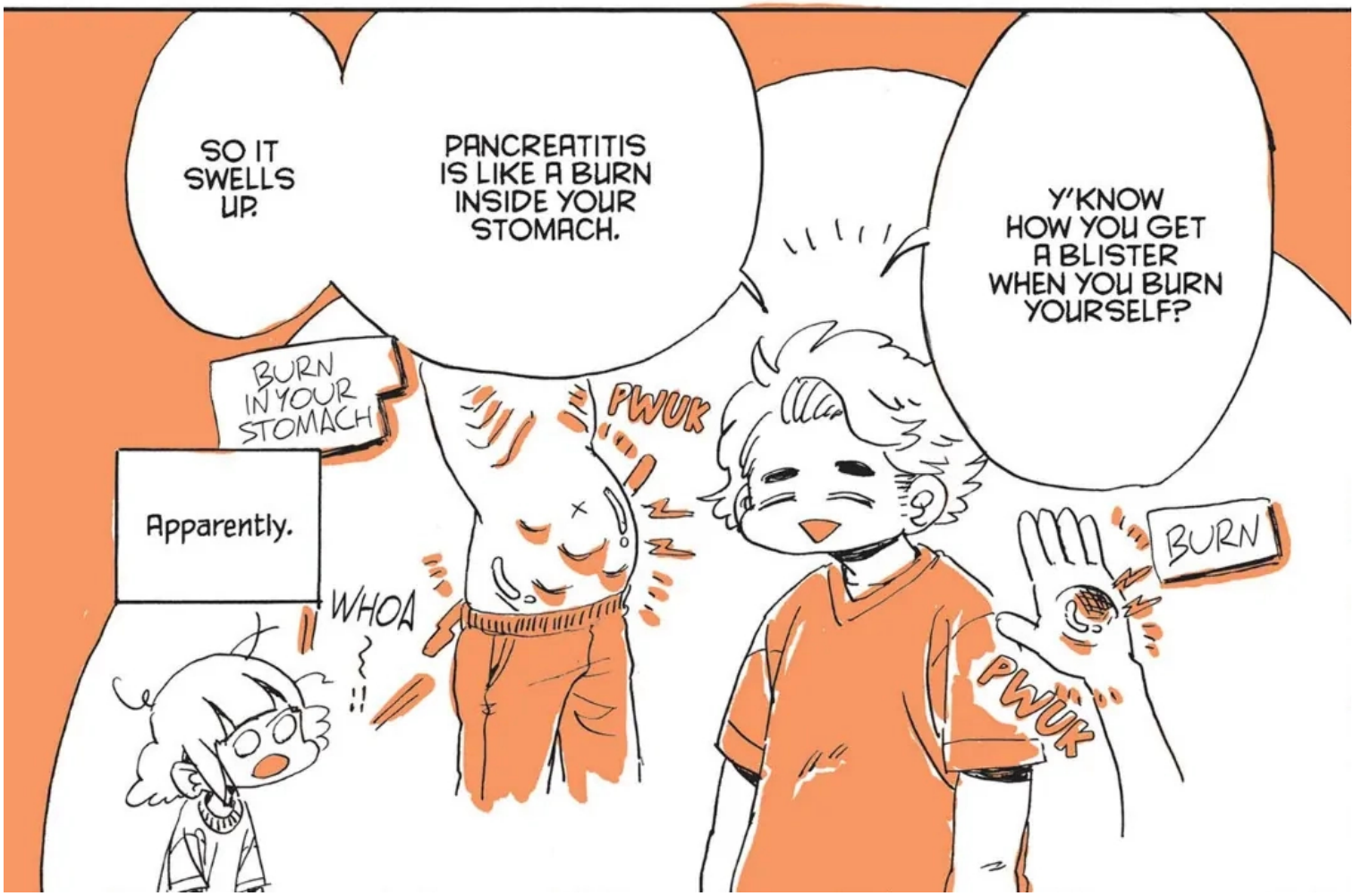
The first incredible thing was my whole body swelling up.

Naturally, there were a bunch of changes in my body that hadn't happened last time, when I got proper treatment in the hospital.


If I poked my stomach or legs, there'd be these deep indentations.
I WAS ALL BUMPY AND PUFFY.
My legs and stomach were particularly bad.
MOM
I'd do stuff like this.
A RE-CORD-ER!
LOOK!
I had some fun with it.
I got these weird mottled bumps. They were kind of gross.
FINGER-MARKS
MOTTLED BUMPS
Not only would there be these obvious marks if I poked my stomach...


I was ten kilos heavier than I was when I went to the hospital five days earlier.
??!!
+10 kg
I was so puffed up...

THAT'S THE PANCREATITIS.
OHH
I learned this later, but according to the doctor...


SO IT SWELLS UP.
PANCREATITIS IS LIKE A BURN INSIDE YOUR STOMACH.
Y'KNOW HOW YOU GET A BLISTER WHEN YOU BURN YOURSELF?
BURN IN YOUR STOMACH
Apparently.
WHOA
!!
PWUK
BURN
PWUK

I would wear adult diapers...

DISPOSABLE ADULT DIAPER

SUPER ABSORBENT

It was so bad I couldn't leave the toilet.

The next incredible thing was intense diarrhea.

FOOOO

NEW PLAYER

INTENSE DIARRHEA

SORRY FOR THE GROSS STORY...

but it was so intense that they would burst sometimes.

MOM

YOU WANT GRANDMA'S DIAPERS? I CAN SEND THEM.

11:11

READ 11:11

YES!! THANK YOU!!

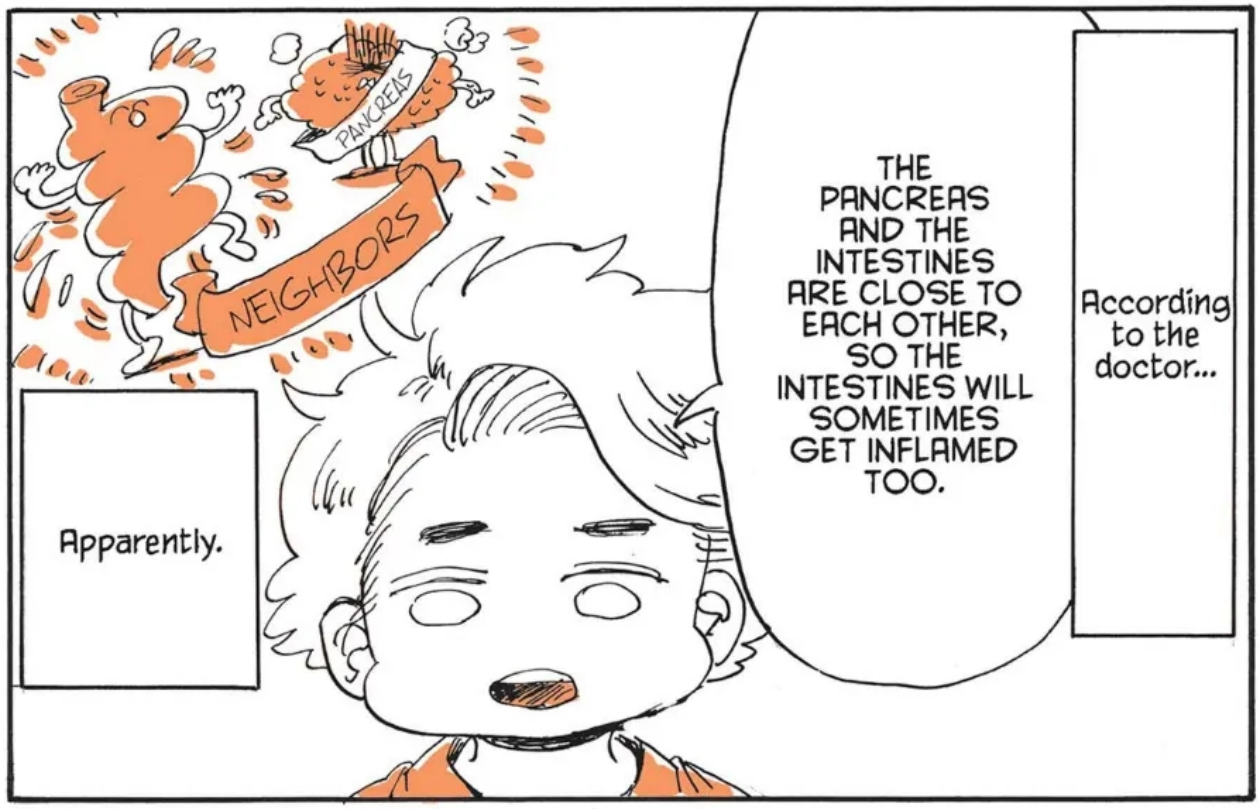
So I had them send me the diapers, which I made liberal use of. That was a huge help.

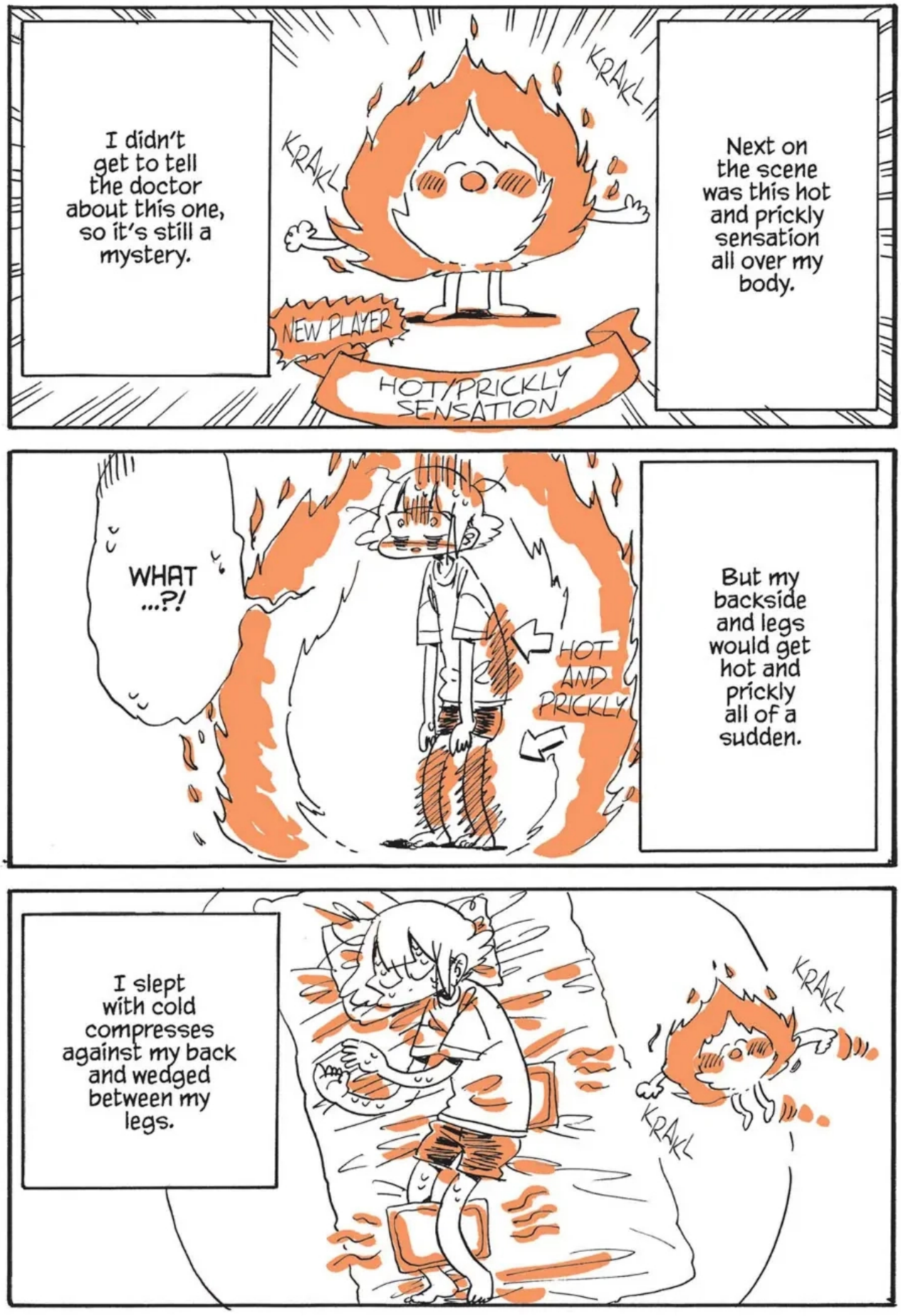
My grandmother had only just died, so there were a lot of adult diapers at my parents' house.

I WENT THROUGH A CUBIC METER OF THEM...

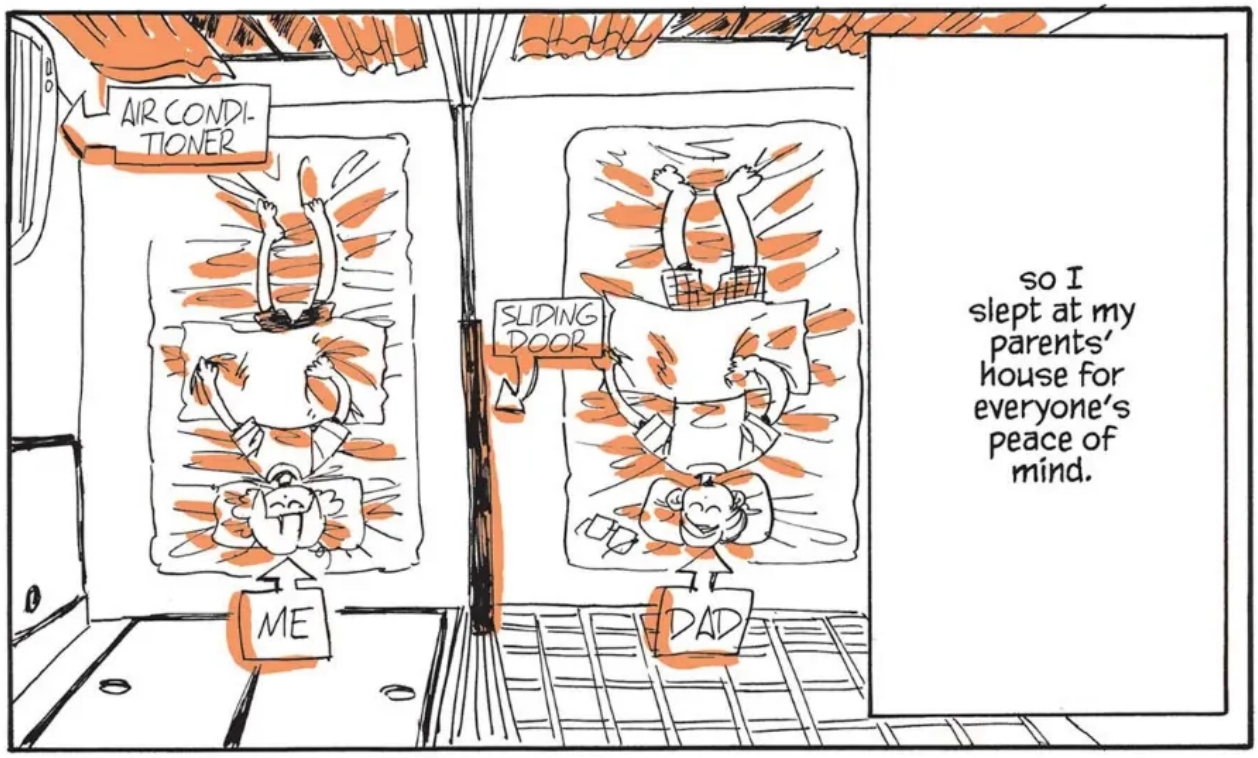
were grinding violently.
SKRK
SKRK
SKRK
SKRK
My stomach wasn't merely grumbling. My intestines...

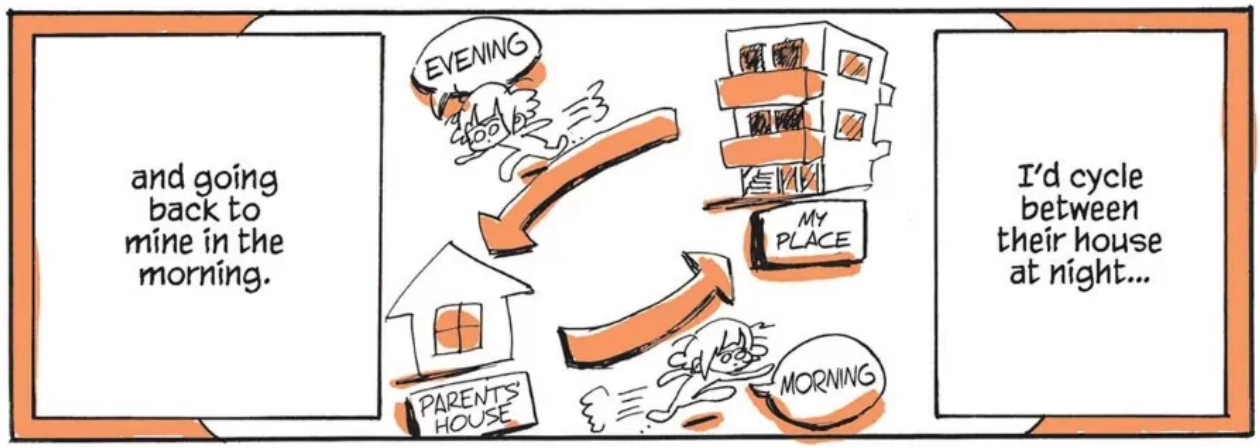
BFFS!!
SKRK
SKRK
SKRK
The intense diarrhea went on for a fairly long time.


PANCREAS
NEIGHBORS
Apparently.
THE PANCREAS AND THE INTESTINES ARE CLOSE TO EACH OTHER, SO THE INTESTINES WILL SOMETIMES GET INFLAMED TOO.
According to the doctor...

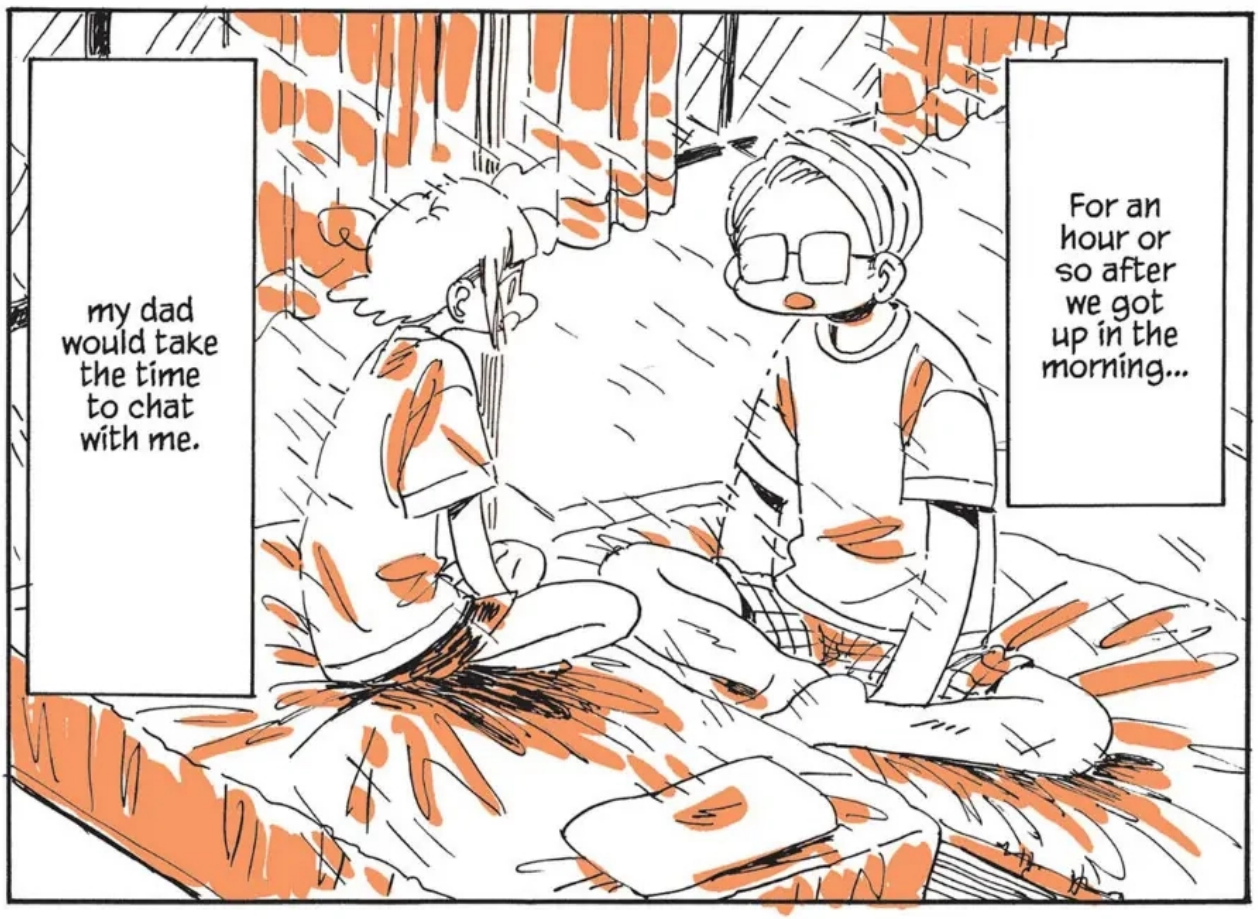

I didn't get to tell the doctor about this one, so it's still a mystery.
KRAKL
KRAKL
NEW PLAYER
HOT/PRICKLY SENSATION
Next on the scene was this hot and prickly sensation all over my body.
WHAT ...?!
HOT AND PRICKLY
But my backside and legs would get hot and prickly all of a sudden.
I slept with cold compresses against my back and wedged between my legs.
KRAKL
KRAKL

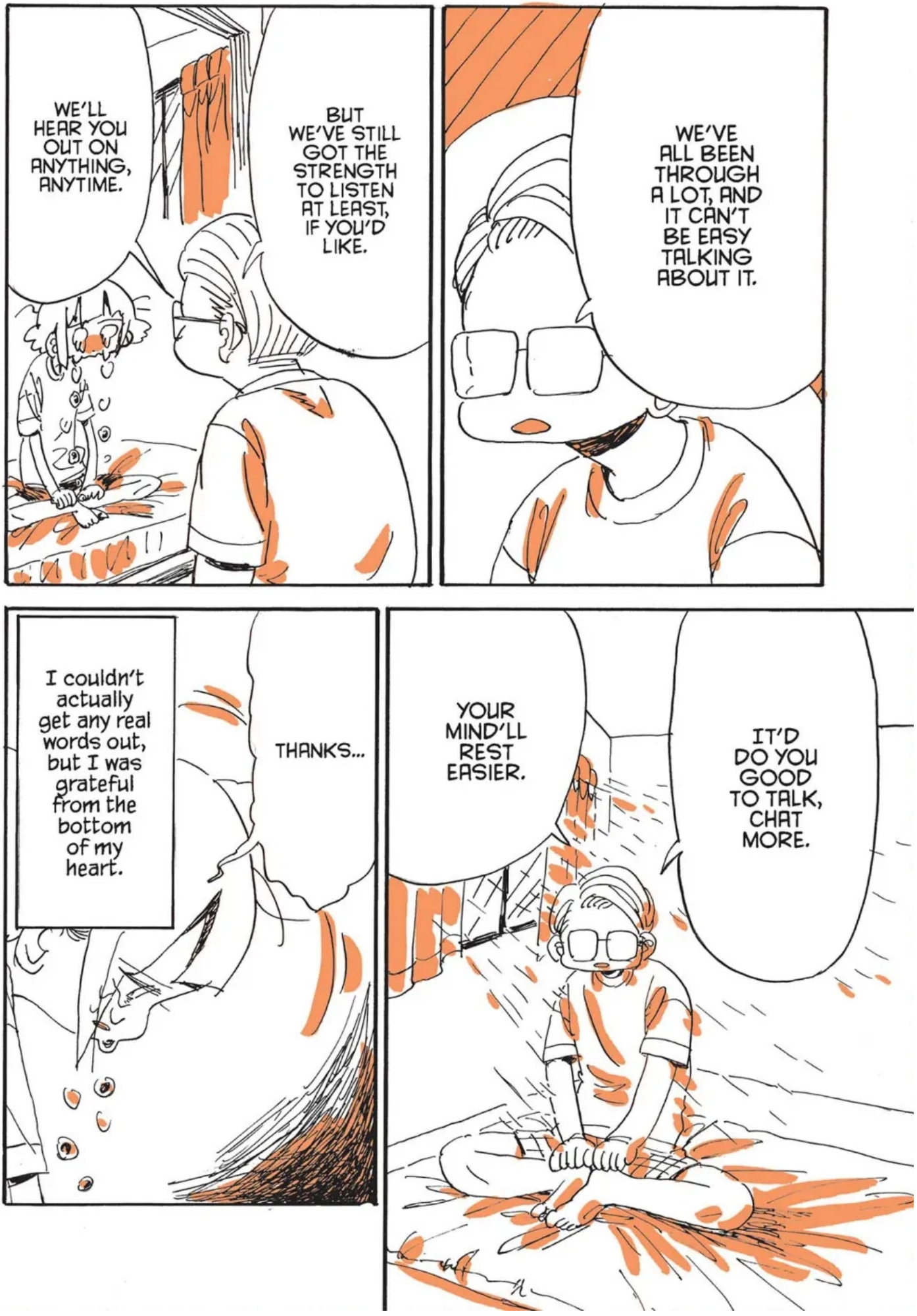
On top of that, my stomach could start hurting again at any time...
NEW!!
OMINOUS ABNORMALITIES
All of these ominous anomalies were scary.

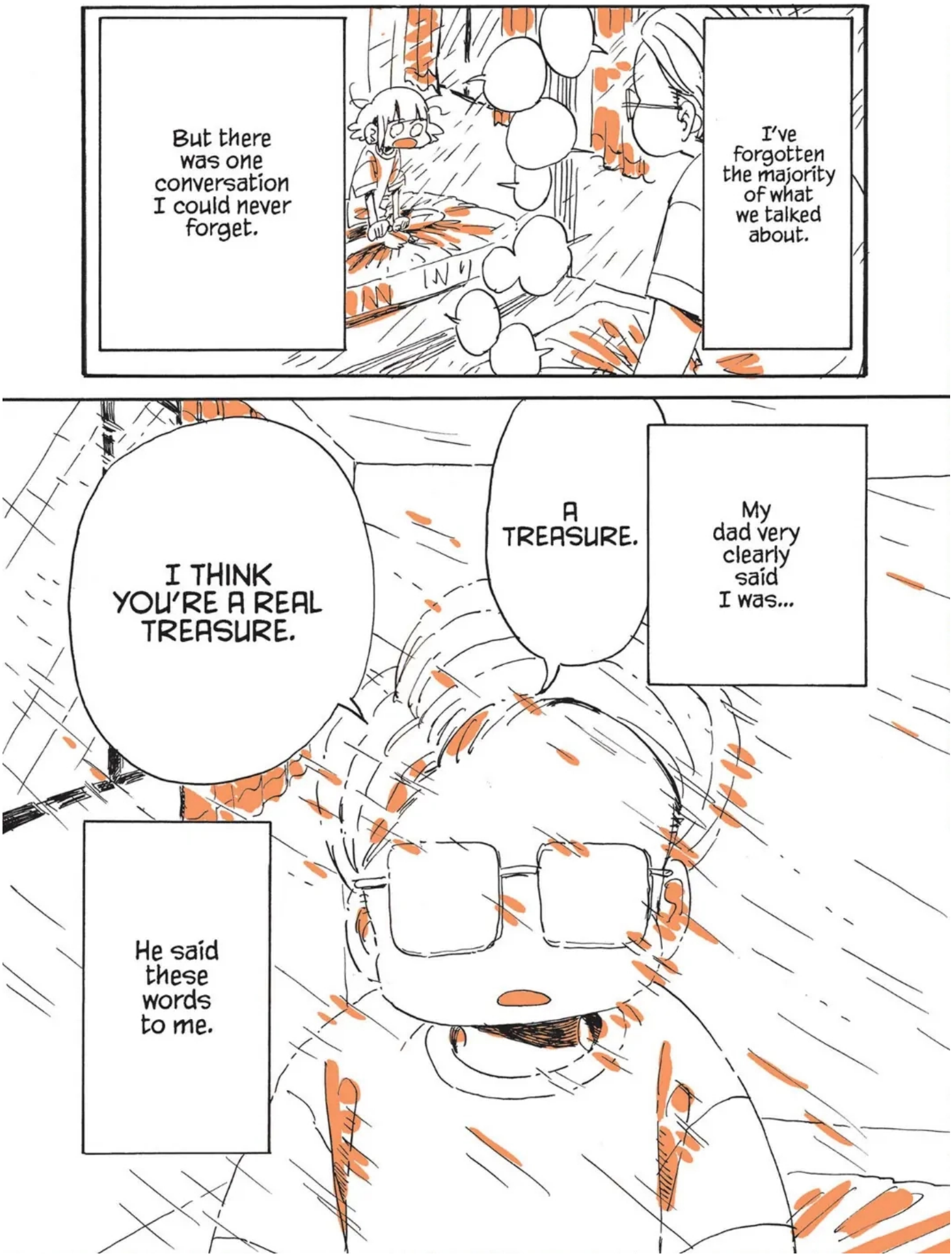

AIR CONDI-TIONER
SLIDING DOOR
ME
DAD
so I slept at my parents' house for everyone's peace of mind.

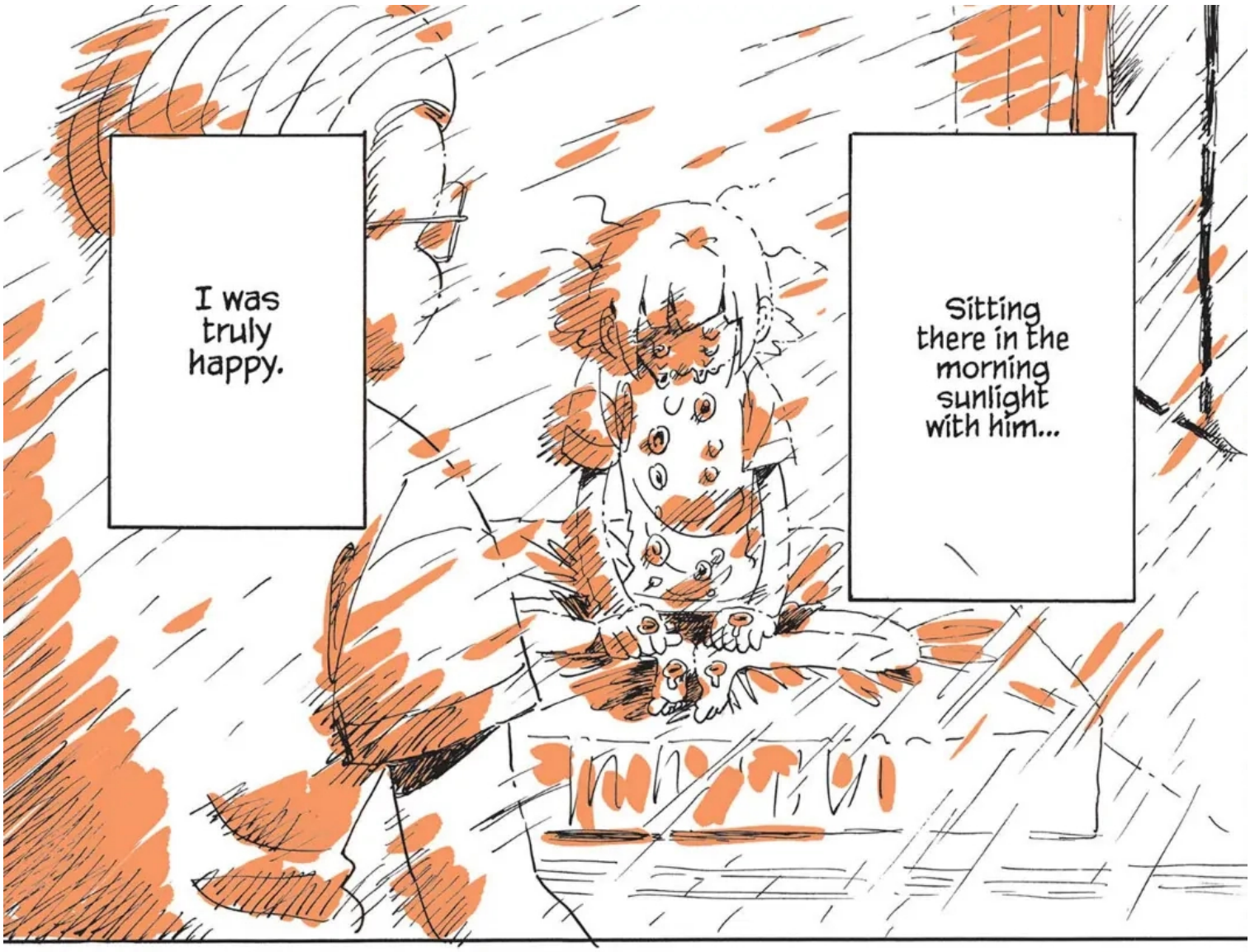

and going back to mine in the morning.
EVENING
MY PLACE
PARENTS' HOUSE
MORNING
I'd cycle between their house at night...

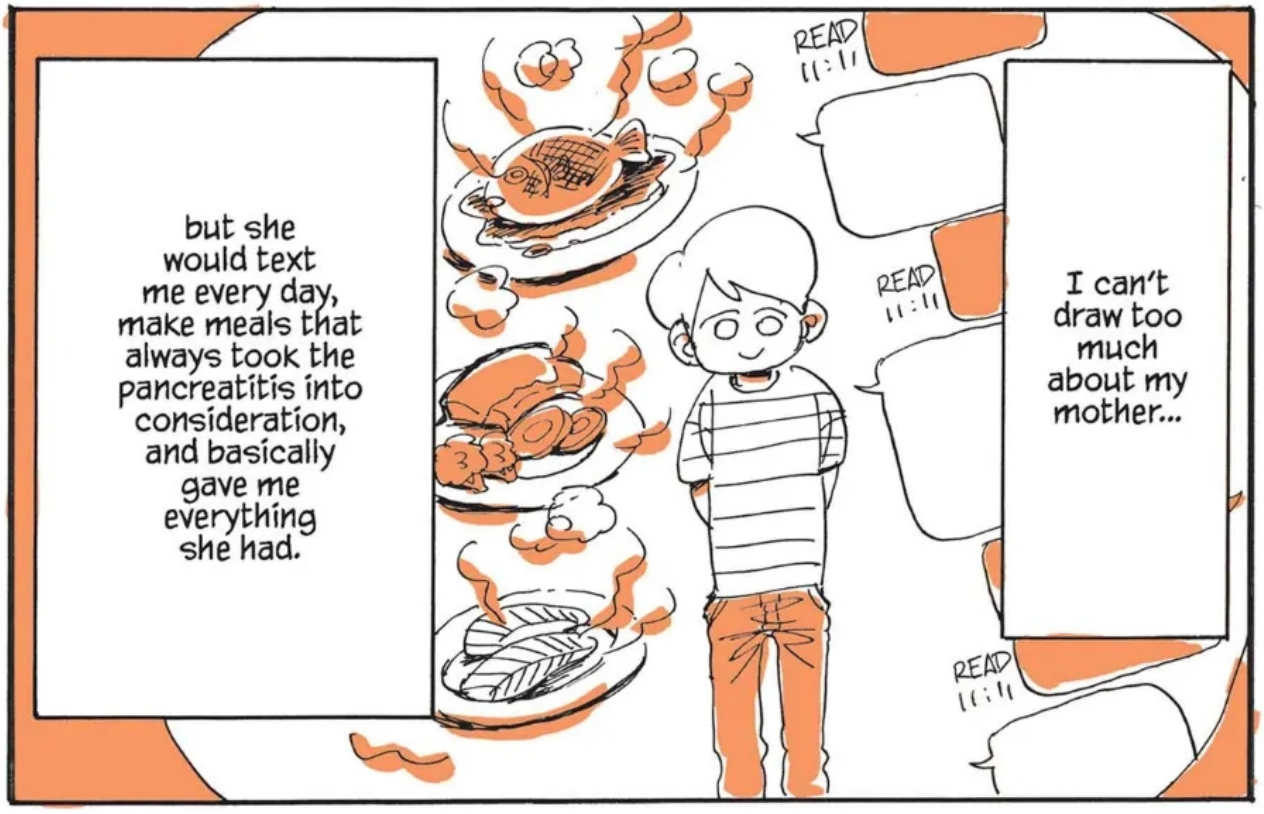
Every day, my mom would make me something she'd done some research on, something that was good for pancreatitis (steamed vegetables, non-fatty fish, chicken breast, et cetera).


my dad would take the time to chat with me.
For an hour or so after we got up in the morning...


WE'LL HEAR YOU OUT ON ANYTHING, ANYTIME.
BUT WE'VE STILL GOT THE STRENGTH TO LISTEN AT LEAST, IF YOU'D LIKE.
WE'VE ALL BEEN THROUGH A LOT, AND IT CAN'T BE EASY TALKING ABOUT IT.
I couldn't actually get any real words out, but I was grateful from the bottom of my heart.
THANKS...
YOUR MIND'LL REST EASIER.
IT'D DO YOU GOOD TO TALK, CHAT MORE.


But there was one conversation I could never forget.
I've forgotten the majority of what we talked about.
My dad very clearly said I was...
A TREASURE.
I THINK YOU'RE A REAL TREASURE.
He said these words to me.


I was truly happy.
Sitting there in the morning sunlight with him...


but she would text me every day, make meals that always took the pancreatitis into consideration, and basically gave me everything she had.
READ
READ
READ
I can't draw too much about my mother...

My only foothold in this world had been drinking, but now my parents were giving me the strength to hold myself up without running back to alcohol.

※CONCEPT.

A FOOTHOLD IN THIS WORLD.

This support from my parents was more effective than all of the things I'd done to try to quit drinking.

"correcting for the difficulty they had living and saving themselves."

In this article I read, it said, "Put another way, it's possible that alcohol and drugs became a so-called crutch...

※MATSUMOTO TOSHIHIKO, "WHY DO PEOPLE BECOME ADDICTED?" HEARTNET (AN NHK SOCIAL WELFARE INFORMATION SITE).

was my thought.

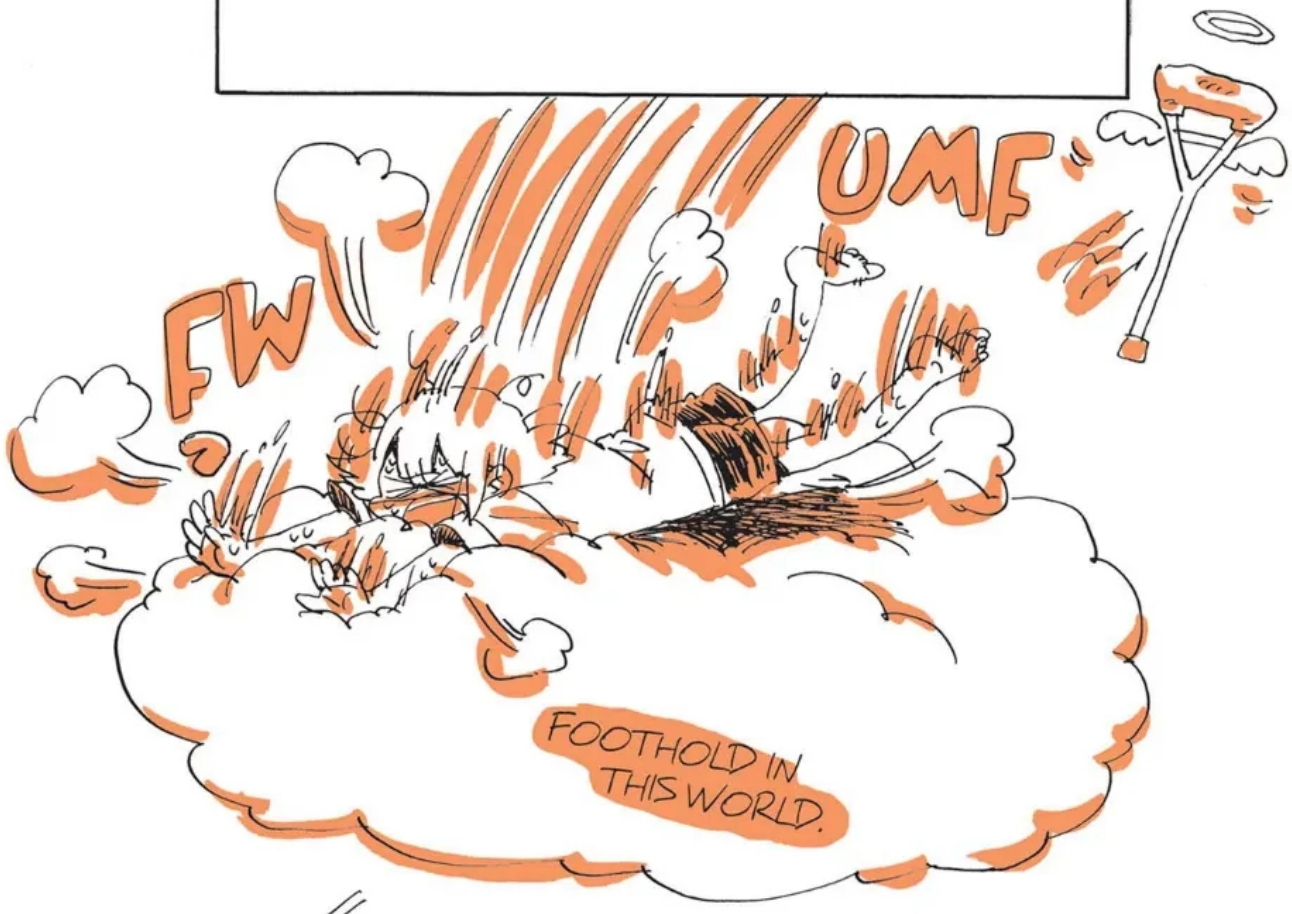
IT'S EXACTLY THIS FEELING!

WP

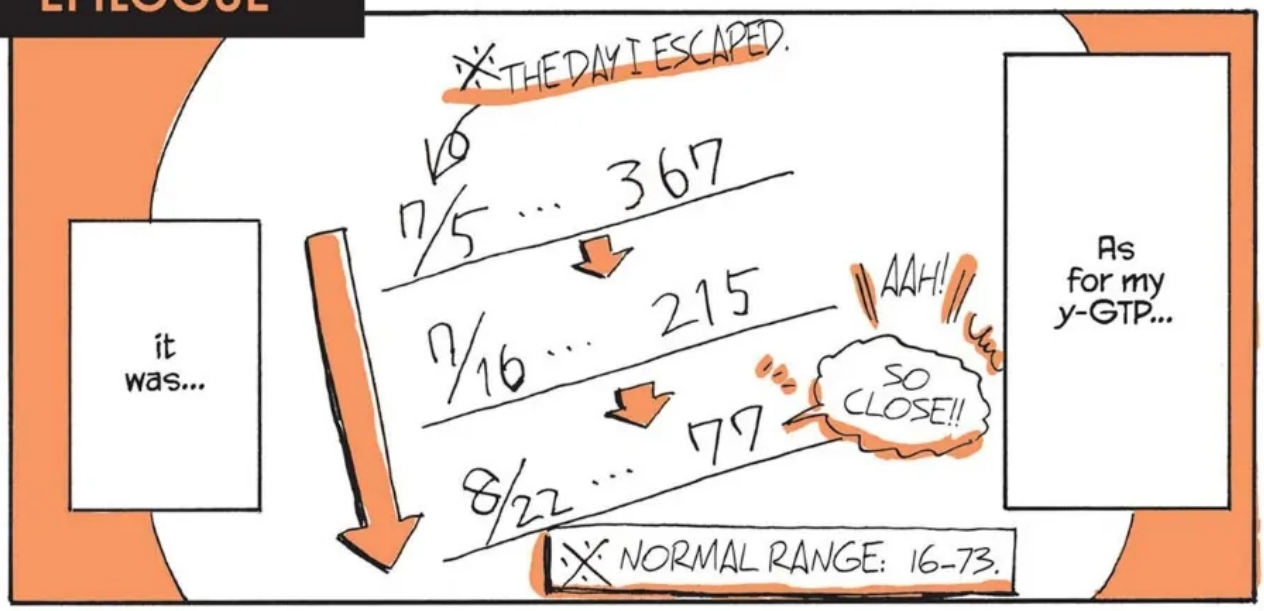
F

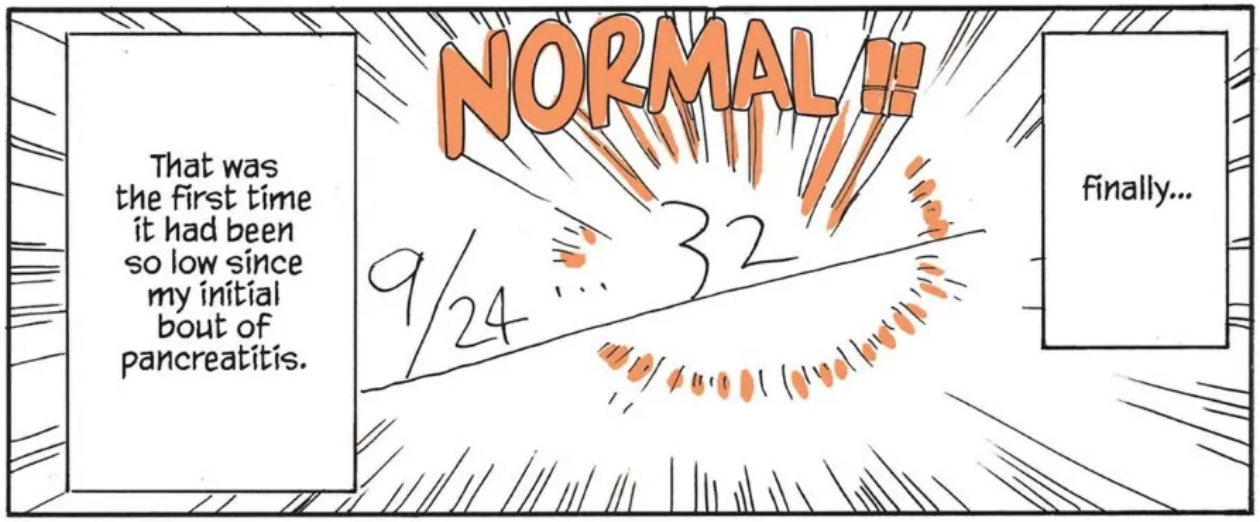
YES! THISSSSS!!

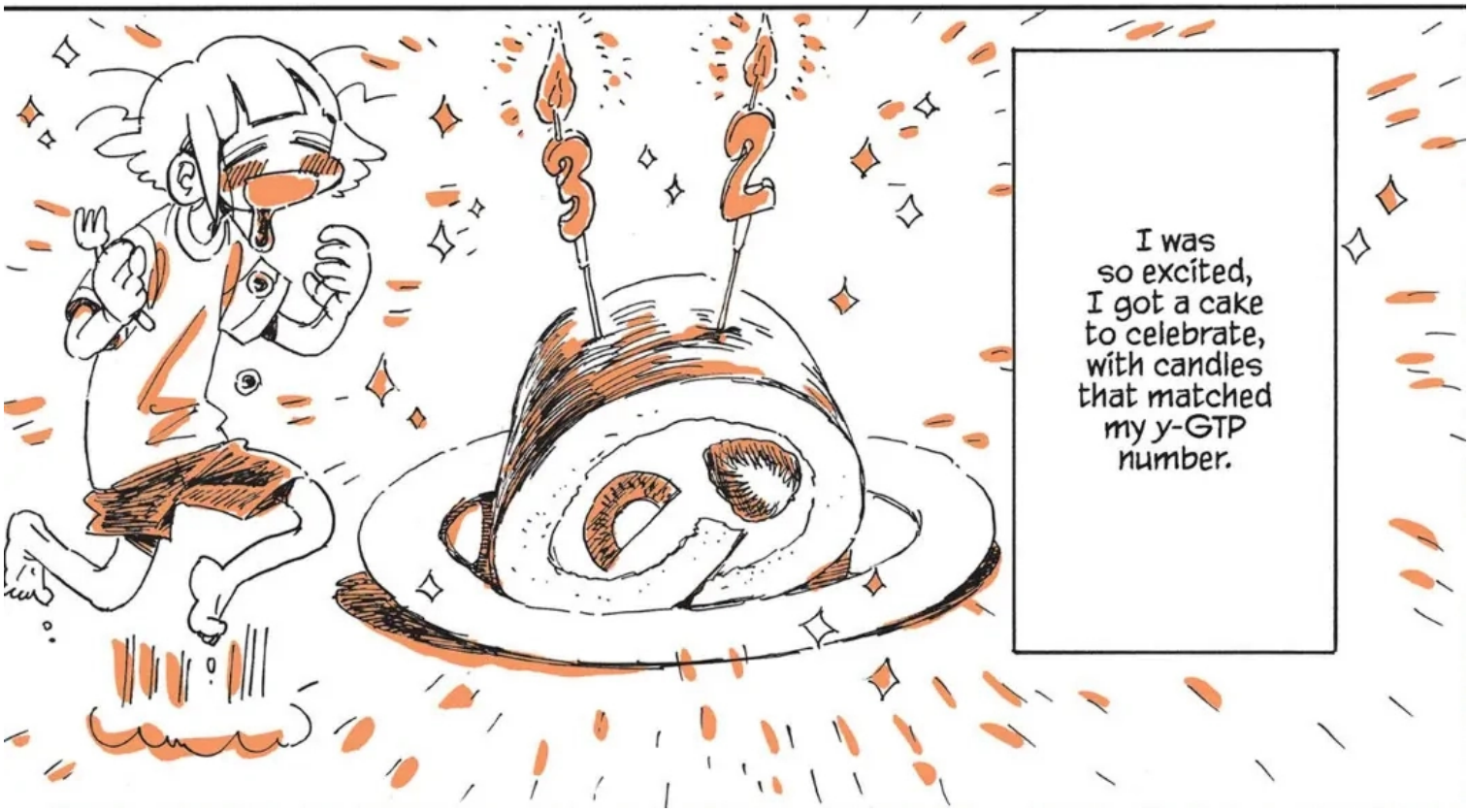
Those mornings filled with my parents' love were a soft, comforting foothold that caught me when I lost my crutch and fell.

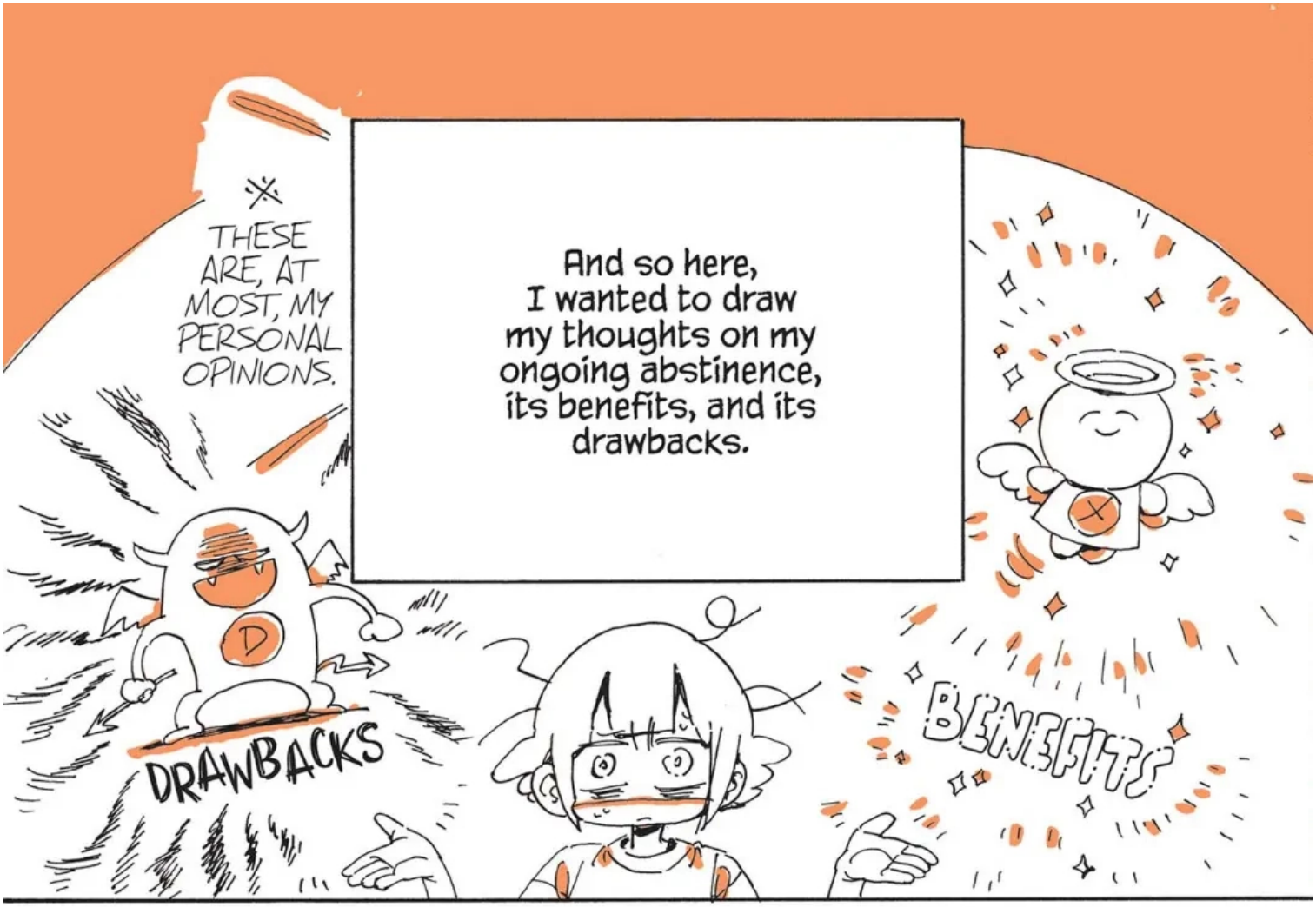


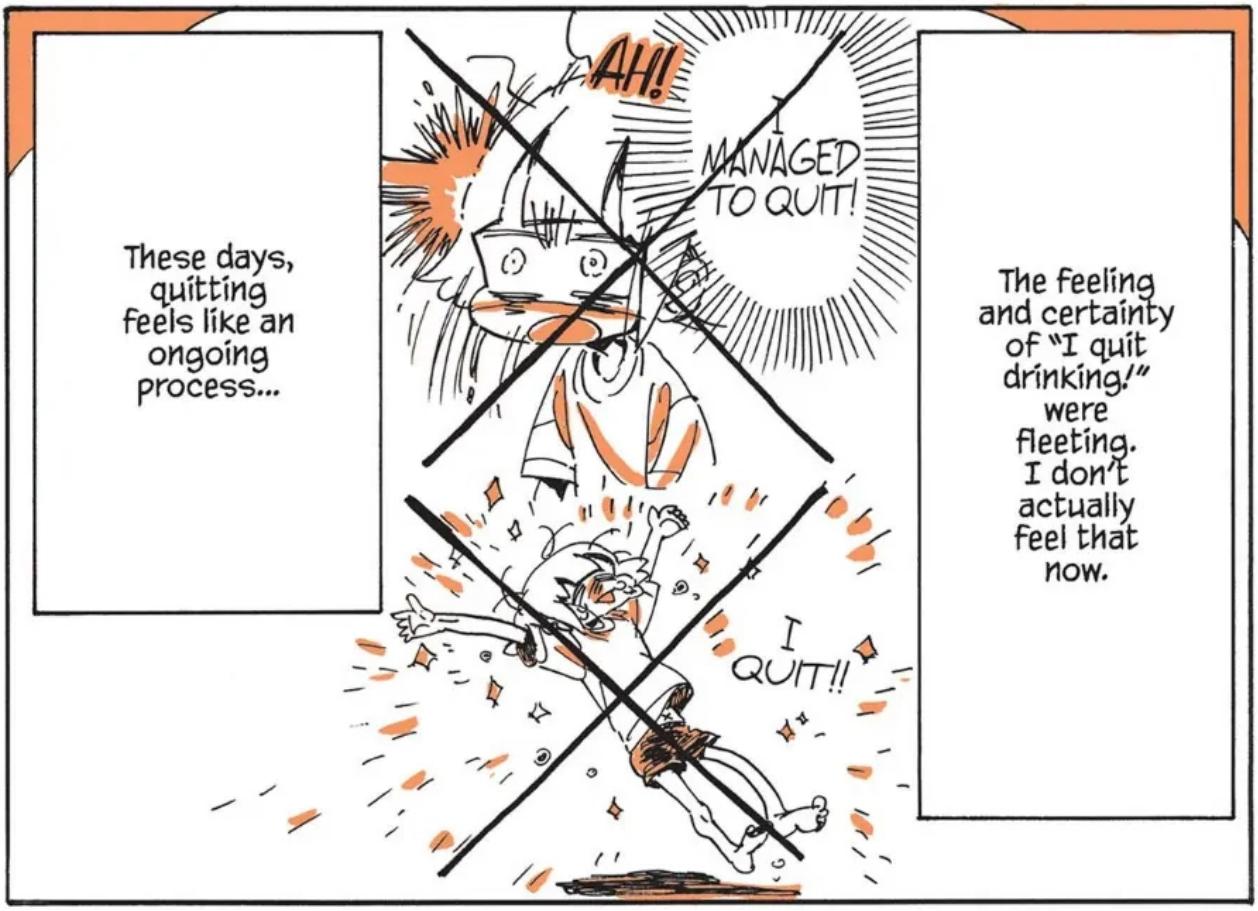
# EPILOGUE


※THE DAY I ESCAPED.
7/5 … 367
7/16 … 215
8/22 … 177
AAH!
SO CLOSE!!
※NORMAL RANGE: 16-73.
it was...
As for my y-GTP...

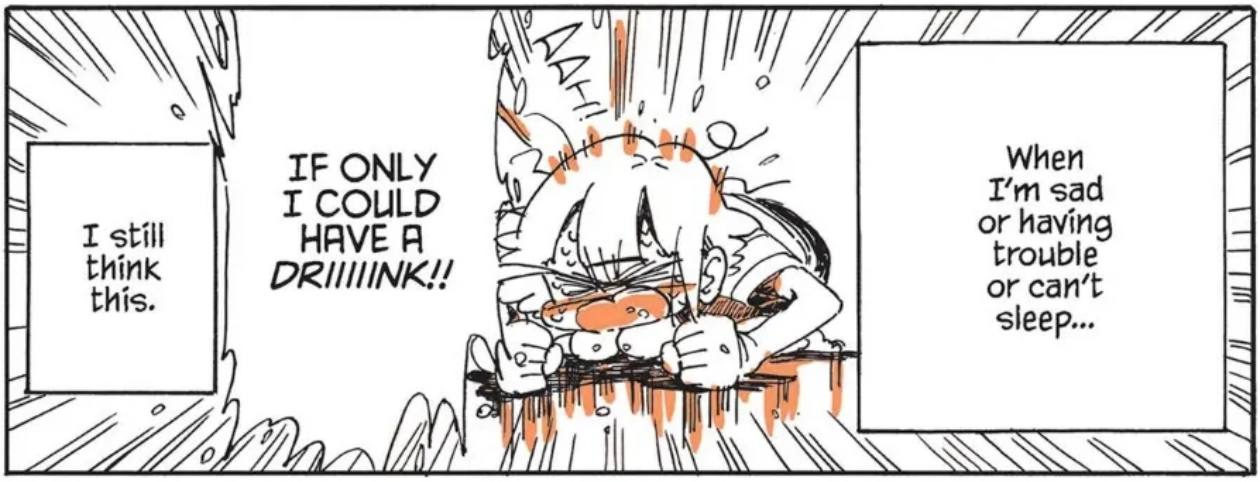

That was the first time it had been so low since my initial bout of pancreatitis.
NORMAL!!
9/24 … 32
finally...

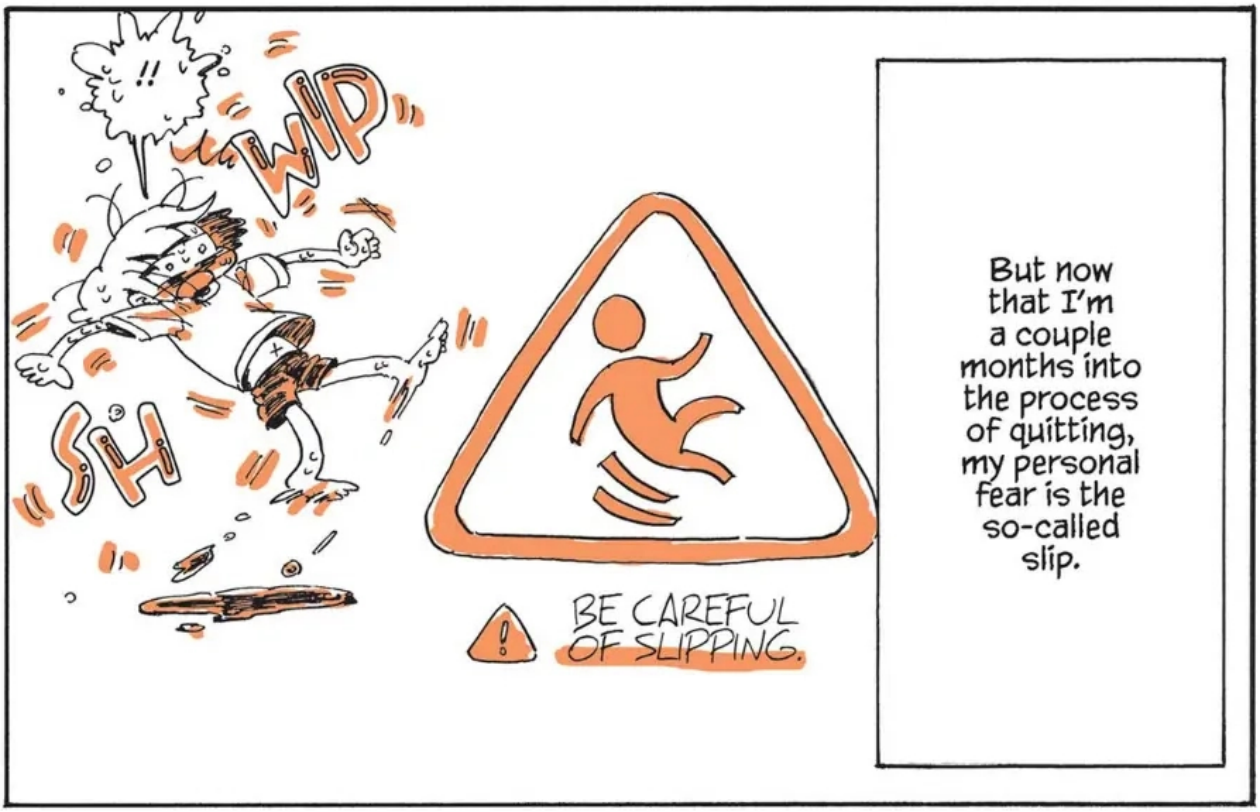

I was so excited, I got a cake to celebrate, with candles that matched my y-GTP number.

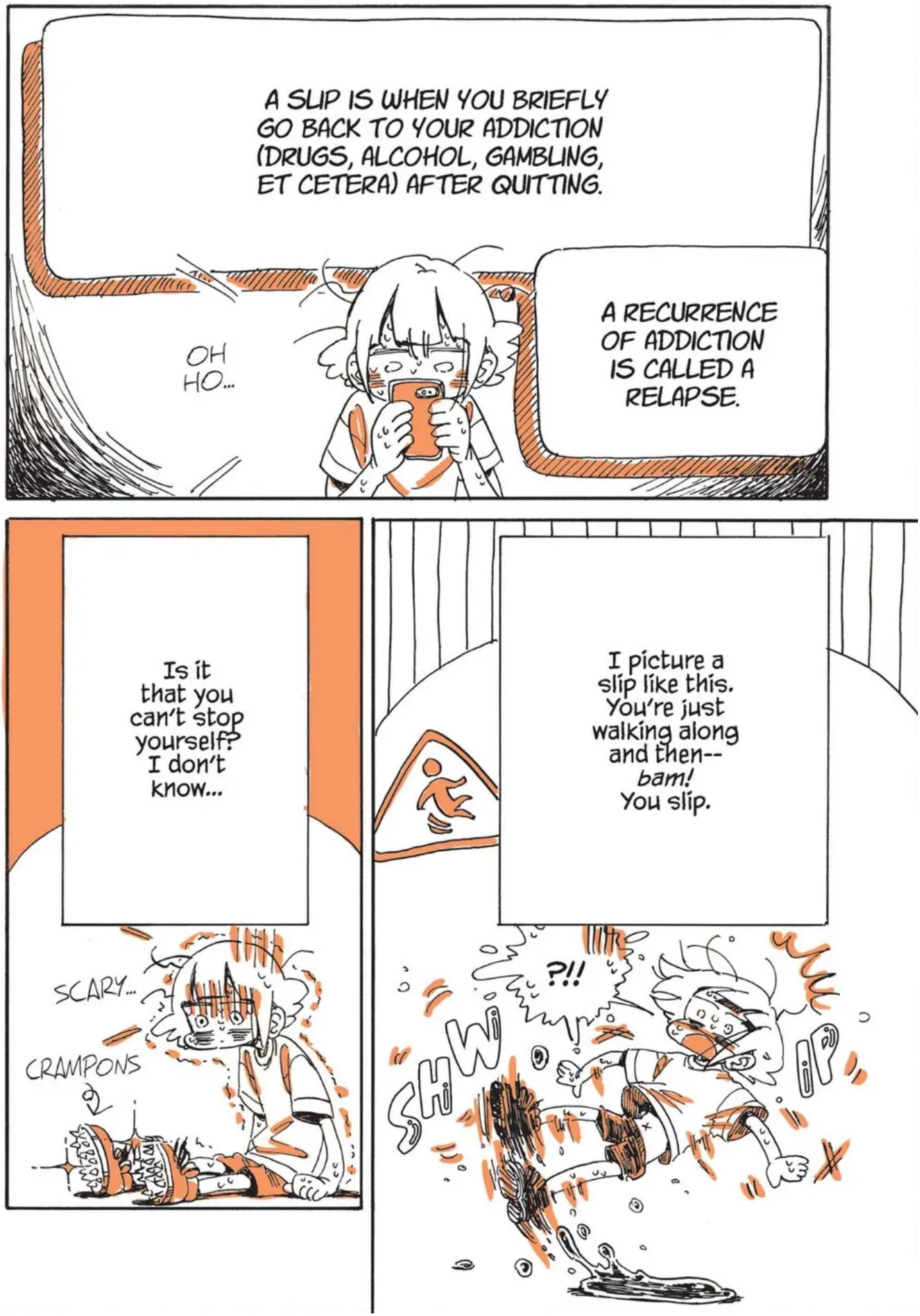

※
THESE ARE, AT MOST, MY PERSONAL OPINIONS.
And so here, I wanted to draw my thoughts on my ongoing abstinence, its benefits, and its drawbacks.
DRAWBACKS
BENEFITS?

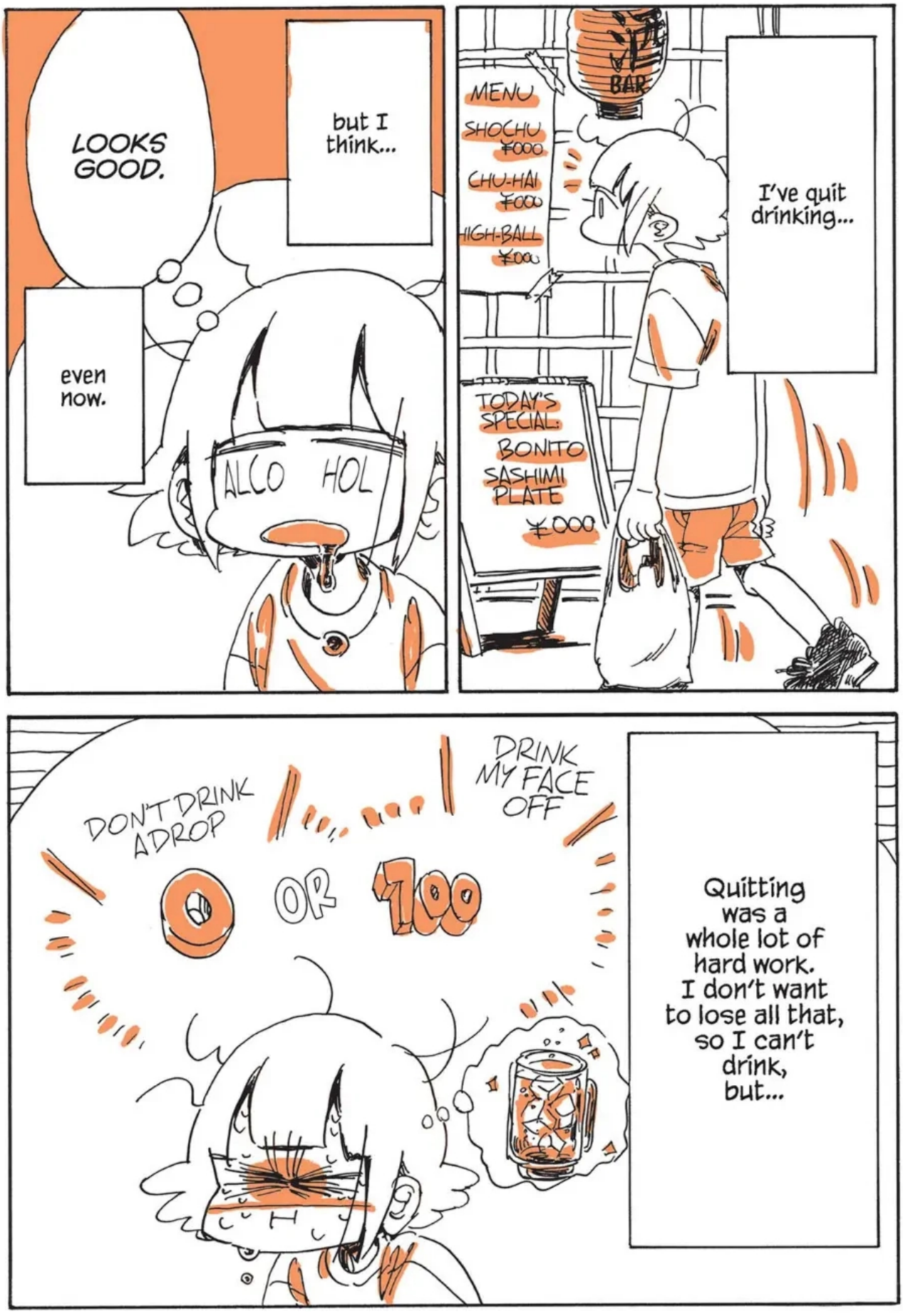

These days, quitting feels like an ongoing process...
AH!
I MANAGED TO QUIT!
I QUIT!!
The feeling and certainty of "I quit drinking!" were fleeting. I don't actually feel that now.

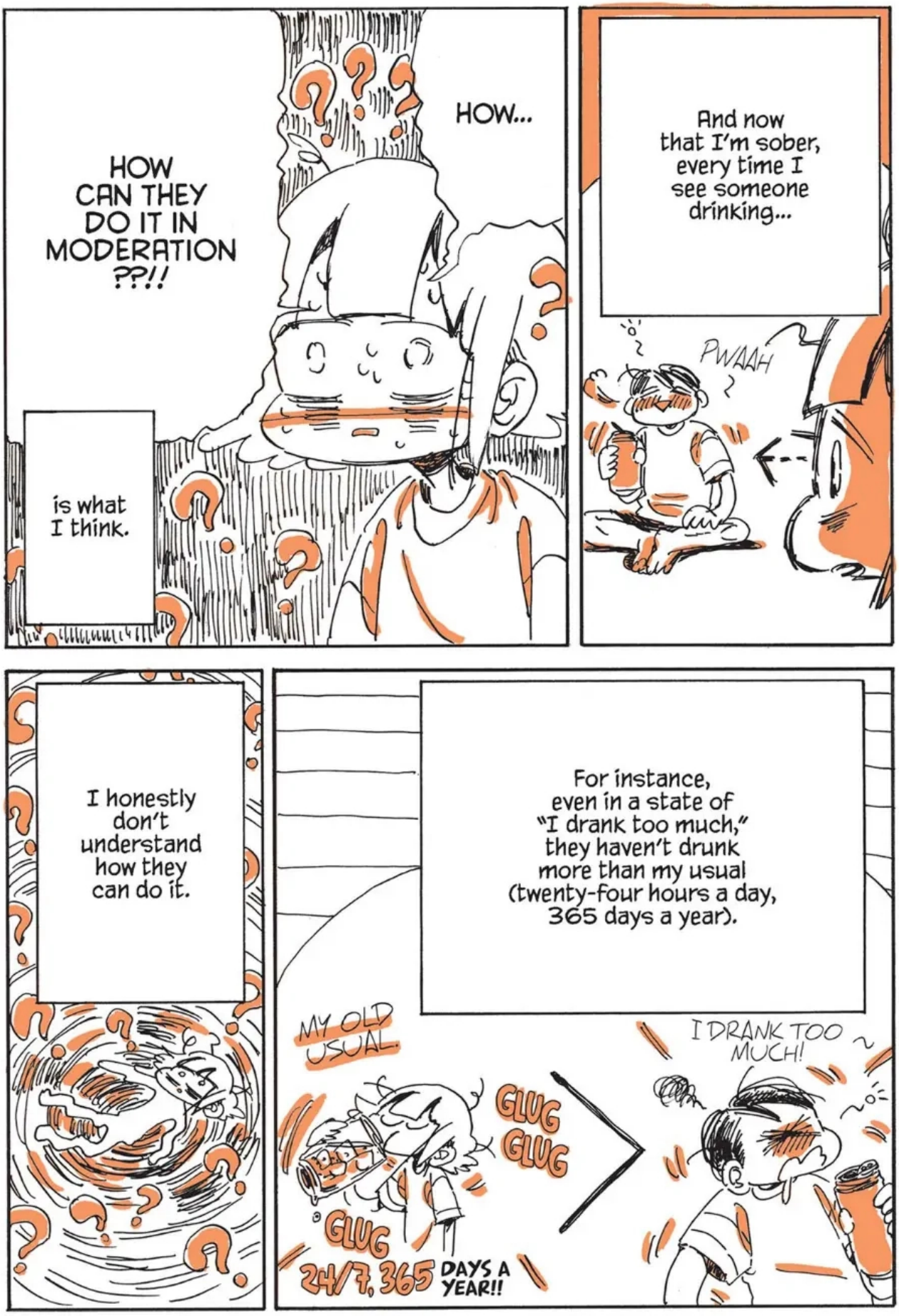
TRA LA LA!
ONGOING STATE OF NOT DRINKING.
but it's not making me struggle or suffer much, which is a relief.


I still think this.
IF ONLY I COULD HAVE A DRIIIIINK!!
AAH!!
When I'm sad or having trouble or can't sleep...


!!
WIP
SH
BE CAREFUL OF SLIPPING.
But now that I'm a couple months into the process of quitting, my personal fear is the so-called slip.


A SLIP IS WHEN YOU BRIEFLY GO BACK TO YOUR ADDICTION (DRUGS, ALCOHOL, GAMBLING, ET CETERA) AFTER QUITTING.
OH HO...
A RECURRENCE OF ADDICTION IS CALLED A RELAPSE.
Is it that you can't stop yourself? I don't know...
SCARY...
CRAMPONS
I picture a slip like this. You're just walking along and then-- *bam!* You slip.
?!!
SHWOOP


LOOKS GOOD.
but I think...
even now.
ALCO HOL
BAR
MENU
SHOCHU ¥000
CHU-HAI ¥000
HIGH-BALL ¥000
TODAY'S SPECIAL
BONITO SASHIMI PLATE
¥000
I've quit drinking...
DON'T DRINK A DROP
0
OR
100
DRINK MY FACE OFF
Quitting was a whole lot of hard work. I don't want to lose all that, so I can't drink, but...


HOW CAN THEY DO IT IN MODERATION ??!!
HOW...
is what I think.
And now that I'm sober, every time I see someone drinking...
PWAAH
I honestly don't understand how they can do it.
For instance, even in a state of "I drank too much," they haven't drunk more than my usual (twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year).
MY OLD USUAL
GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
24/7, 365 DAYS A YEAR!!
I DRANK TOO MUCH!

PERSON
@
I DON'T DRINK WHEN I'M FEELING SAD.
This was the tweet.
??!!
The other thing that shocked me was this tweet about drinking.
NOTHING BUT SADNESS ↓ ALCOHOL! RIGHT??!!
SAD
INSTANTLY
ALCOHOL!!
BUT DON'T YOU DRINK THE MOST WHEN YOU'RE SAD?!
ME
NAGATA @
BUT DON'T YOU DRINK THE MOST WHEN YOU'RE SAD?! HOW CAN THEY EVEN DO THAT?!
is what they said.
But my friend...
FRIEND
@
IT'S MORE OF A SHOCK THAT YOU CAN'T. LOLOL

was my thought.
A LARGE PART OF WHY I GOT INTO DRINKING?
WERE MY POOR COMMU-NICATION SKILLS...
After drawing all that...
STORY-BOARD

But I really feel like the reason it became a full-blown addiction was because of my inability to communicate, and how terrible I am at saying what I actually want.

I CAN'T MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND *ANYTHIIING!!!*

I'M SCARED !!

I CAN'T !!

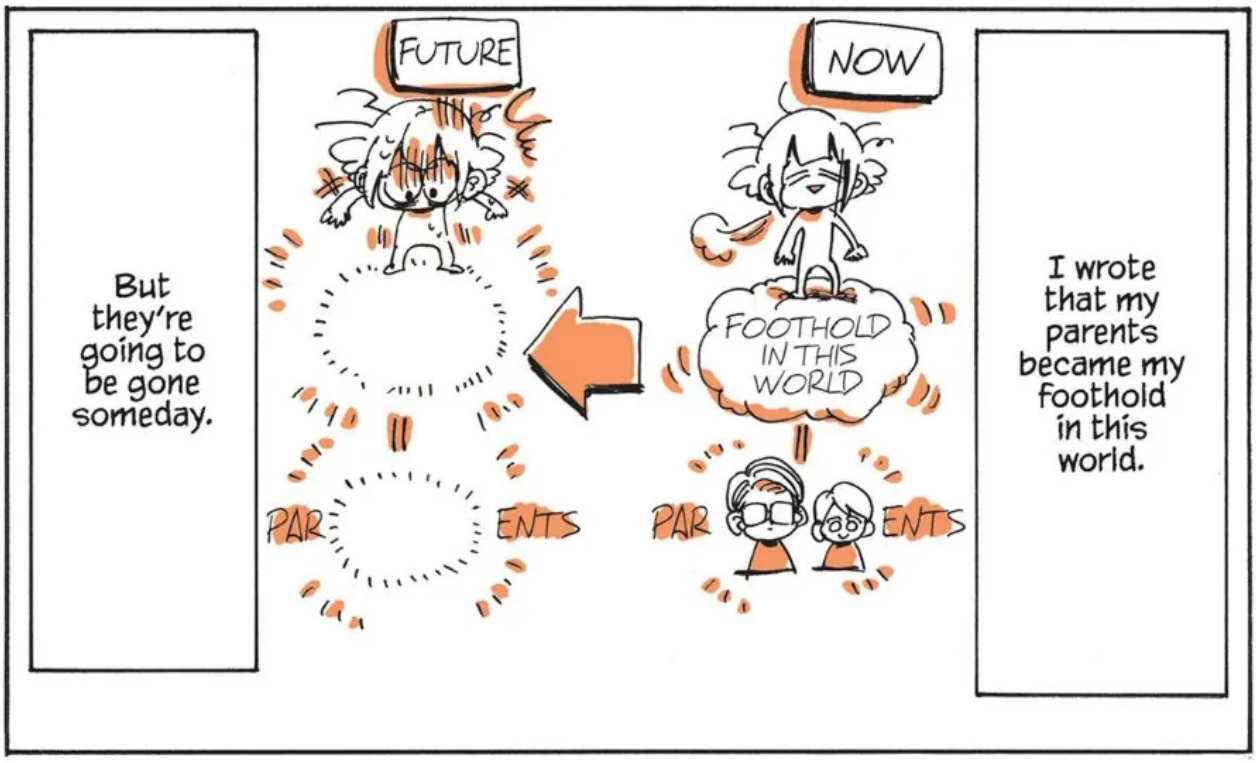
EXCUSE ME! COULD WE GET ANOTHER HIGHBALL, PLEASE?
COMING RIGHT UP!!
ED.
Being treated like an adult might have been the start of my drinking.

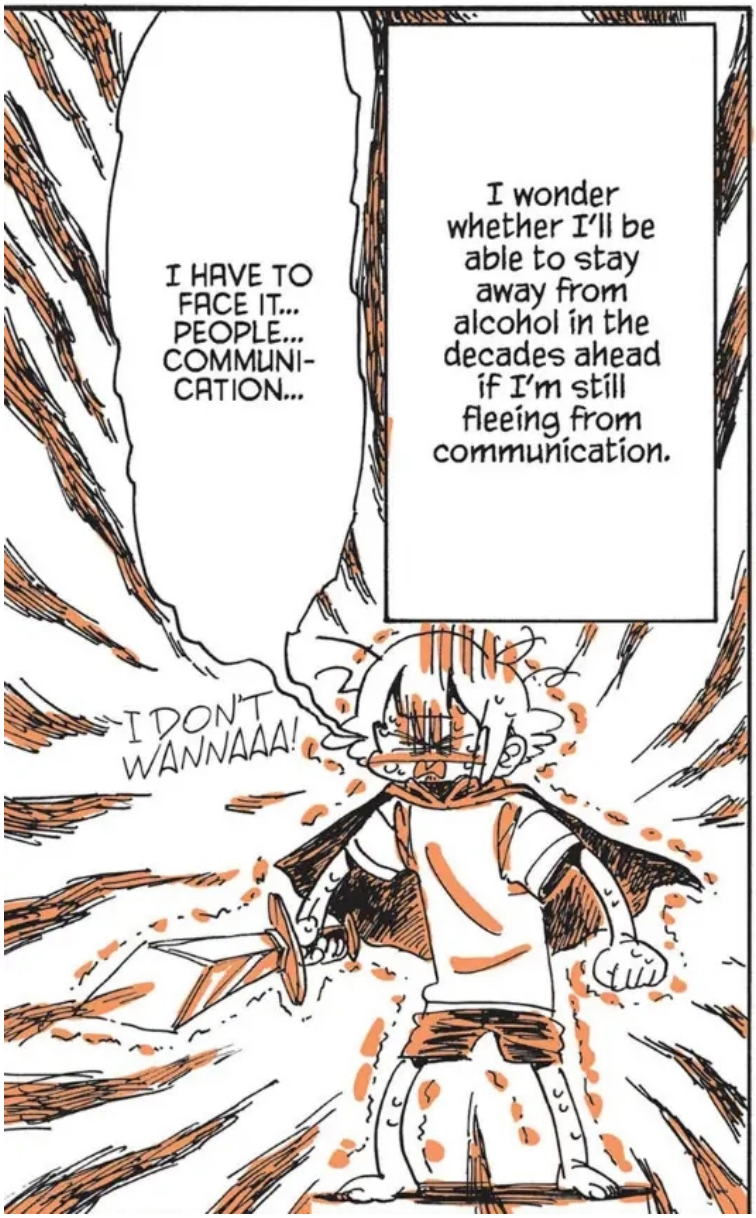
I think I run the risk of getting addicted to something else or escaping into alcohol again.

.....

STORY-BOARD

If I don't fix this...


But they're going to be gone someday.
FUTURE
PAR ENTS
NOW
FOOTHOLD IN THIS WORLD
PAR ENTS
I wrote that my parents became my foothold in this world.


I HAVE TO FACE IT... PEOPLE... COMMUNI-CATION...
I wonder whether I'll be able to stay away from alcohol in the decades ahead if I'm still fleeing from communication.
I DON'T WANNAAA!

For a lot of people, I think the person, place, job, et cetera that becomes their foothold is a self-help group or AA or something.
FOOTHOLD IN THIS WORLD
PERSON
PLACE
JOB
SELF-HELP GROUP, AA, ETC.

First, the benefits.

Now, as for the benefits and drawbacks of quitting drinking...

I feel like the number of days I'm doing good has increased.

(※ *Compared to how I used to be.*)

1. My mental health has stabilized a bit.

(※ *Compared to how I used to be.*)

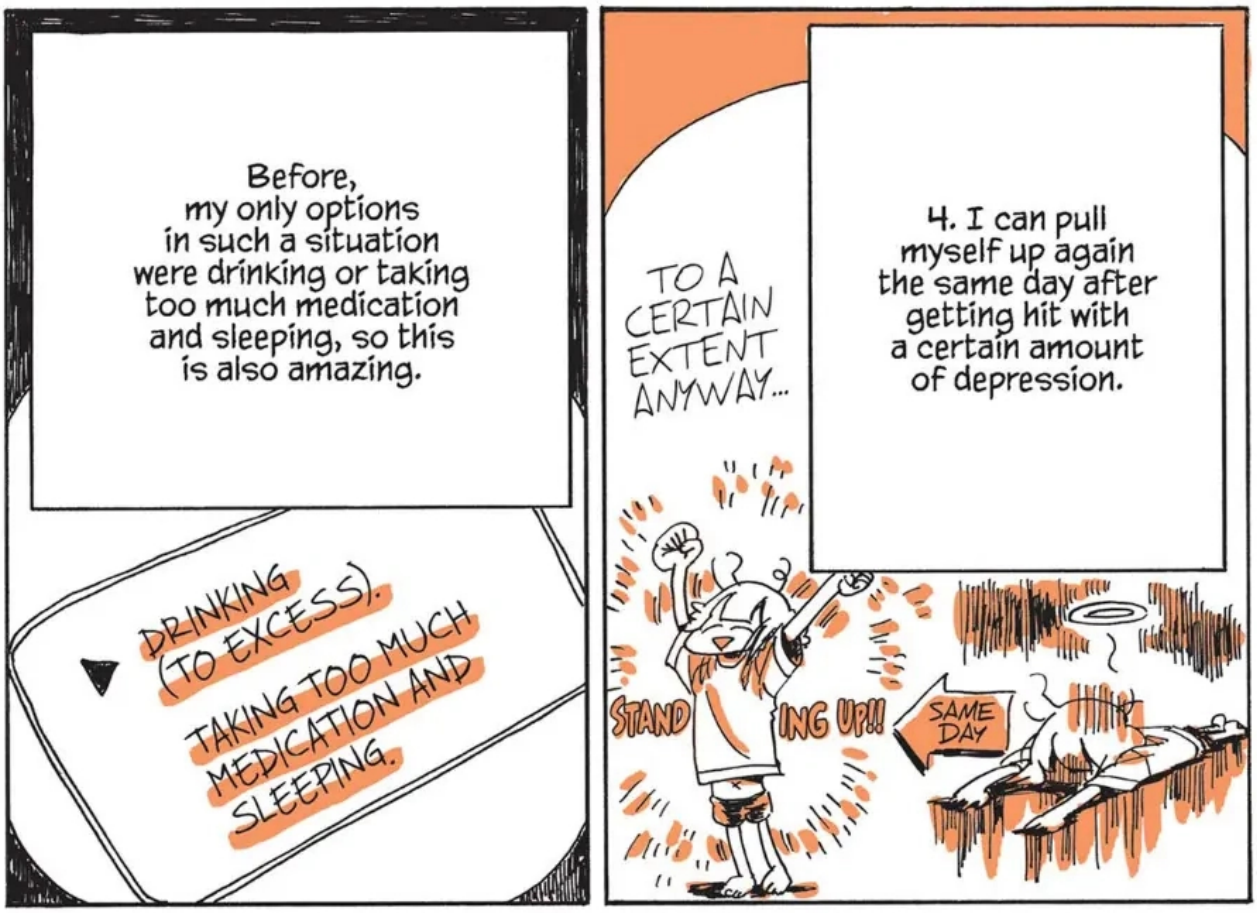
I've started thinking like this.

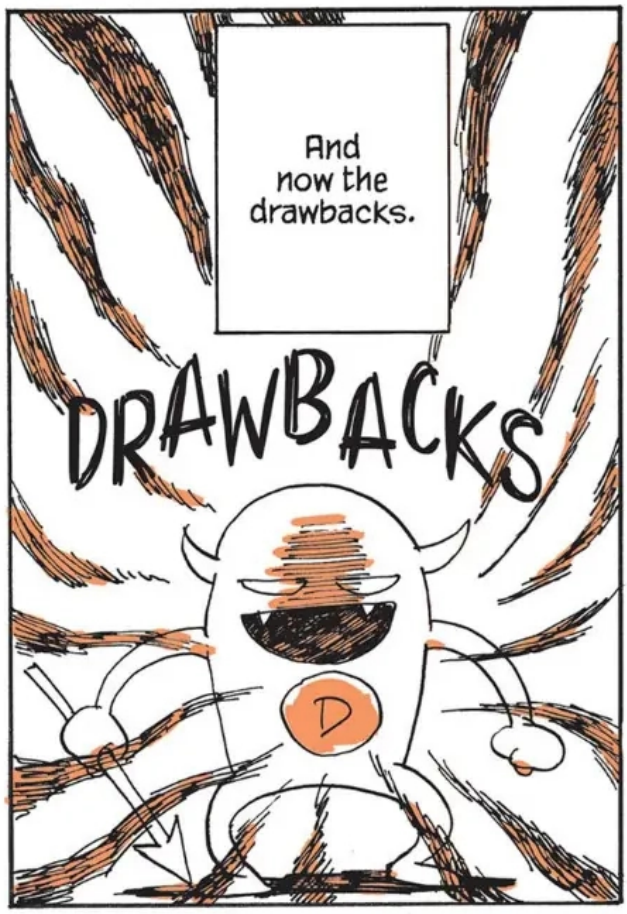
I've never felt this way before, so it's pretty amazing.

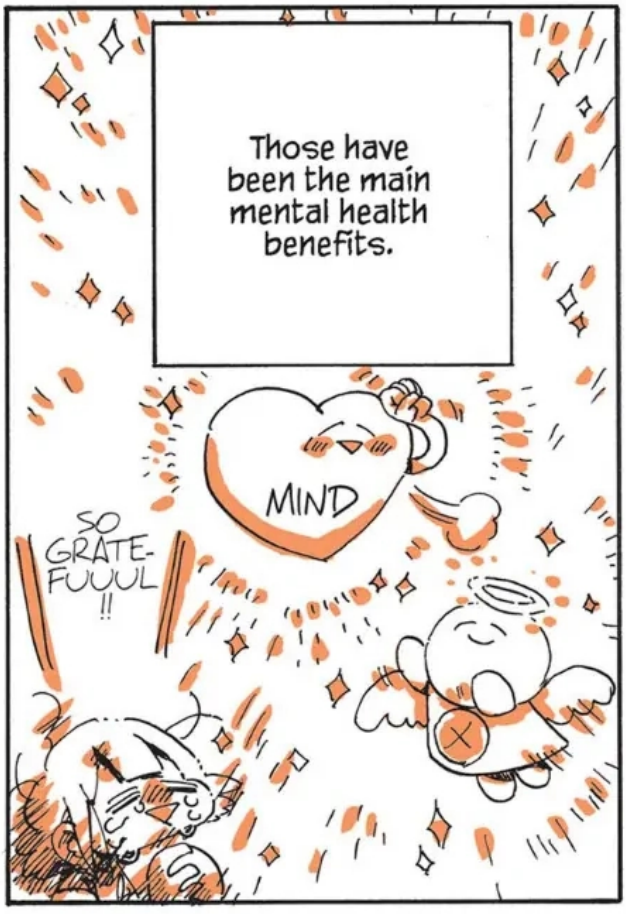
2. I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO TOMORROW!

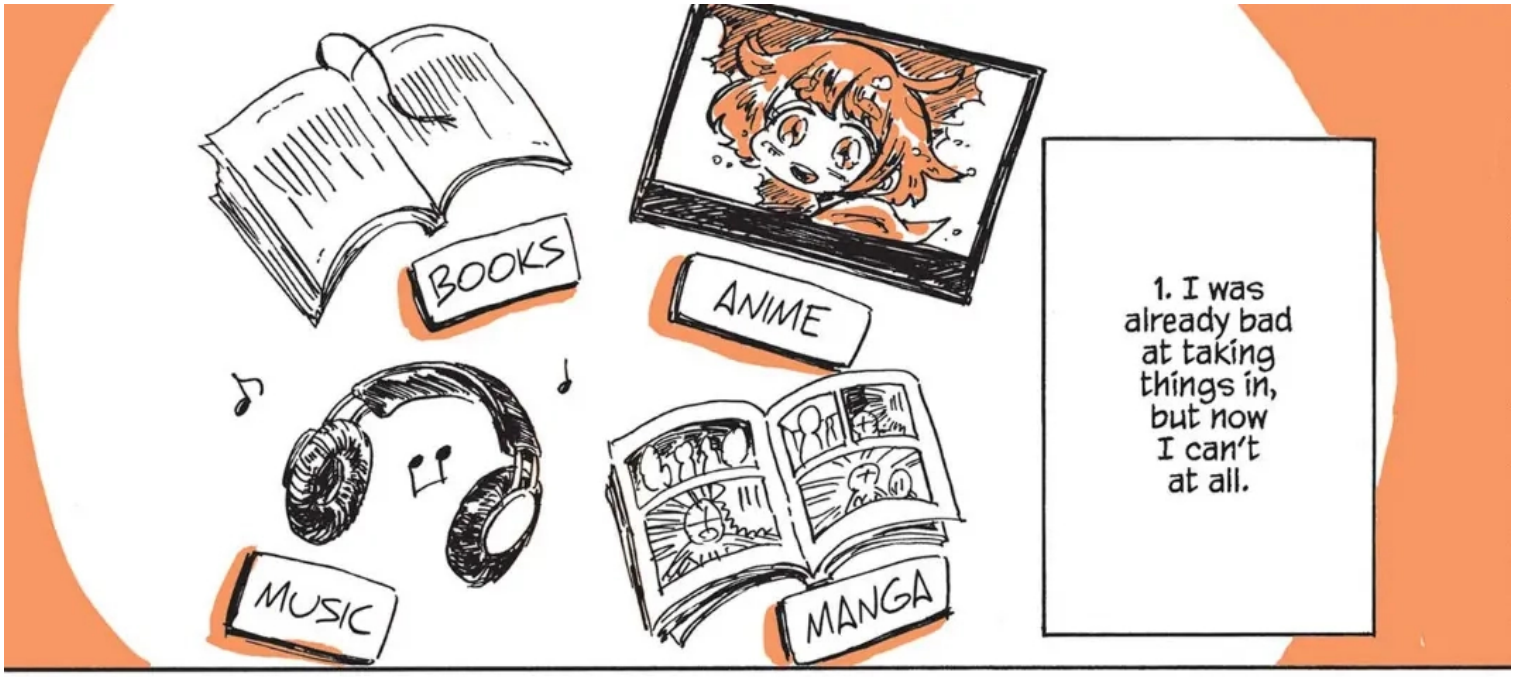
I feel like I wasn't before.

3. I feel like I'm actually alive.


Before, my only options in such a situation were drinking or taking too much medication and sleeping, so this is also amazing.
DRINKING (TO EXCESS).
TAKING TOO MUCH MEDICATION AND SLEEPING.
4. I can pull myself up again the same day after getting hit with a certain amount of depression.
TO A CERTAIN EXTENT ANYWAY...
STAND ING UP!!
SAME DAY

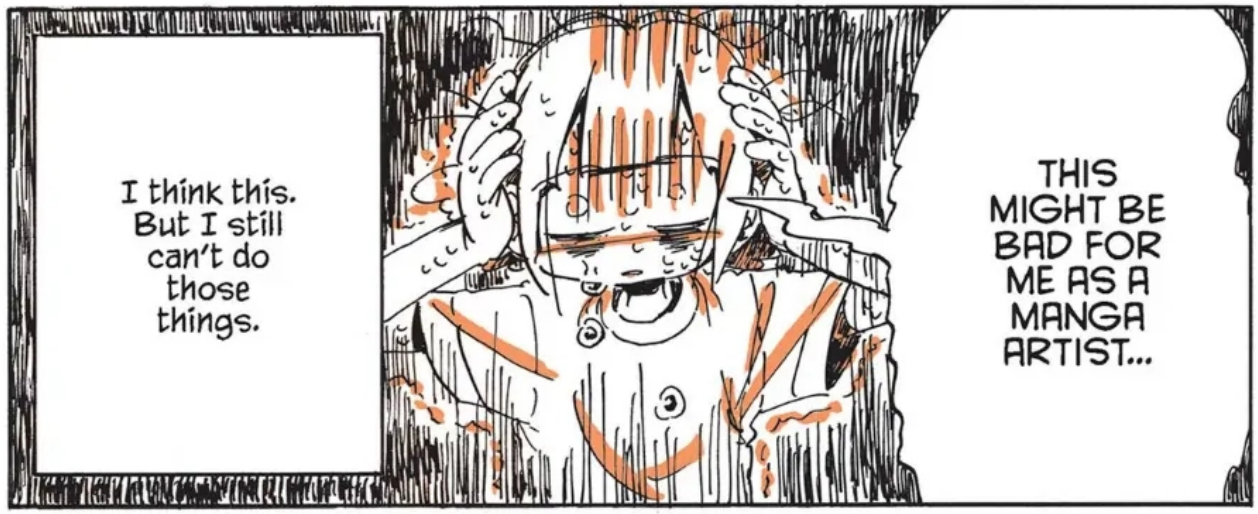

And now the drawbacks.
DRAWBACKS
D

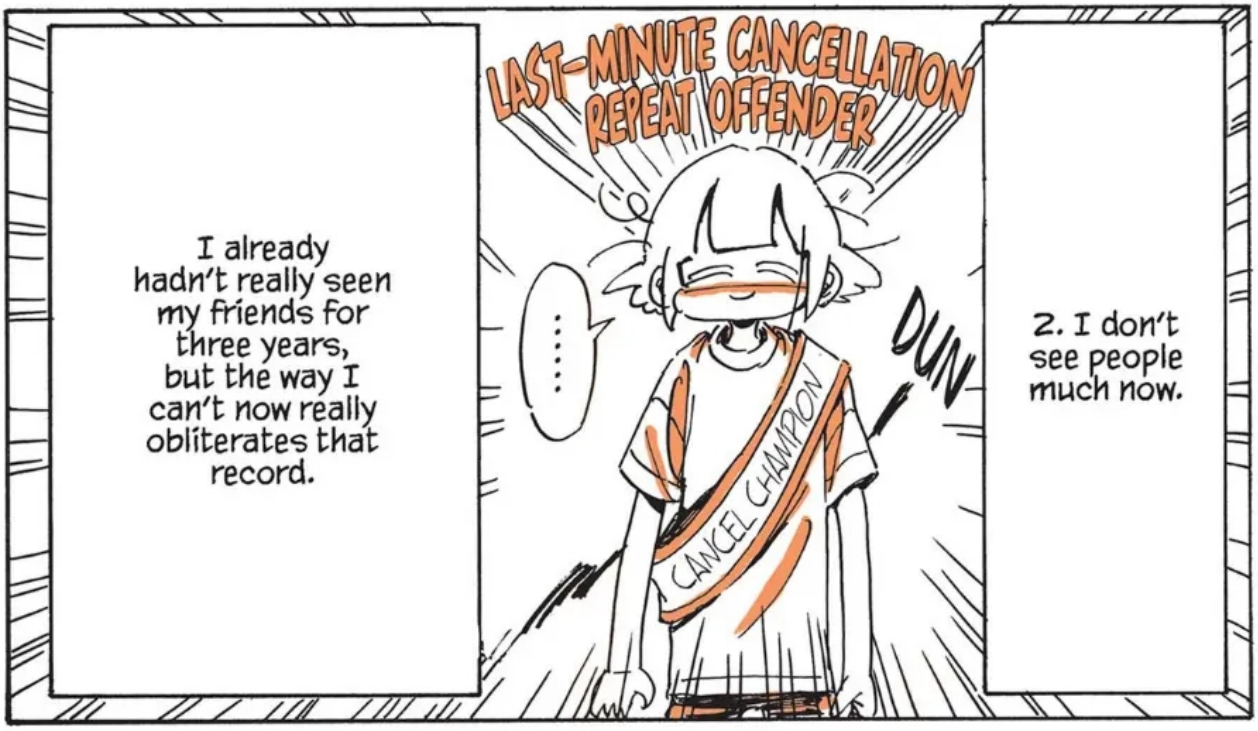

Those have been the main mental health benefits.
MIND
SO GRATE-FUUUL !!


BOOKS
ANIME
MUSIC
MANGA
1. I was already bad at taking things in, but now I can't at all.

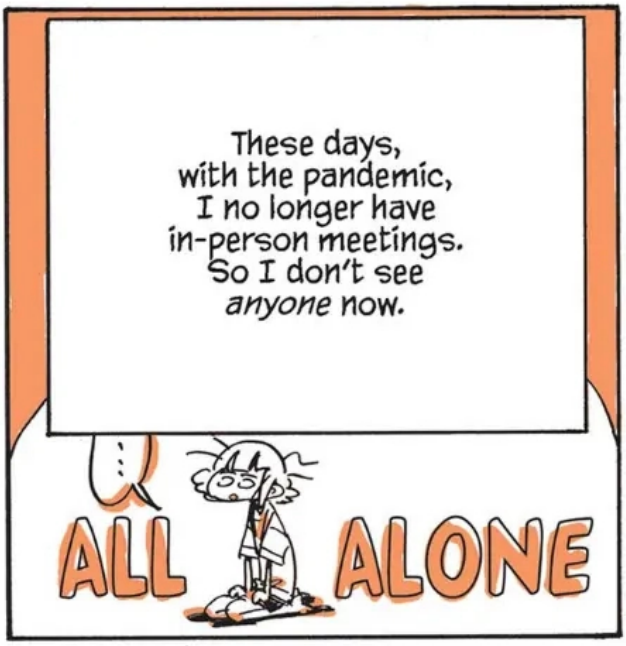
I don't think things like this anymore.
I WANT TO READ THAT!
Not only do I not have a stack of unread books...

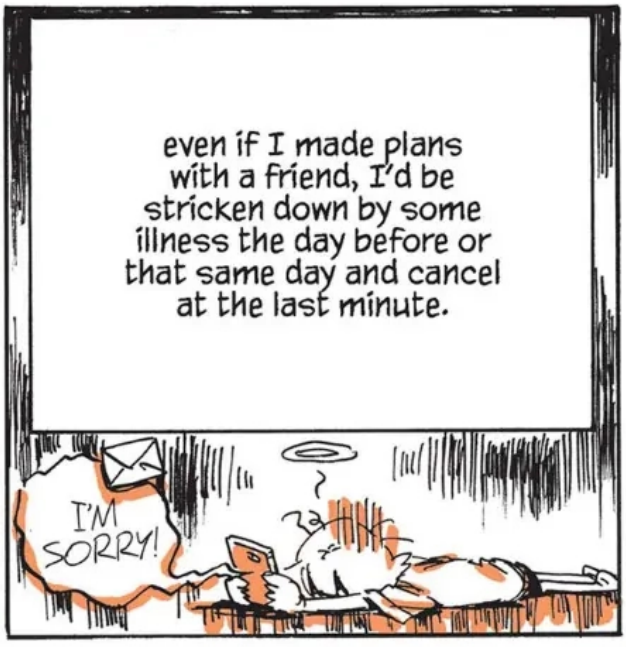
I can't even listen to music while I'm working.

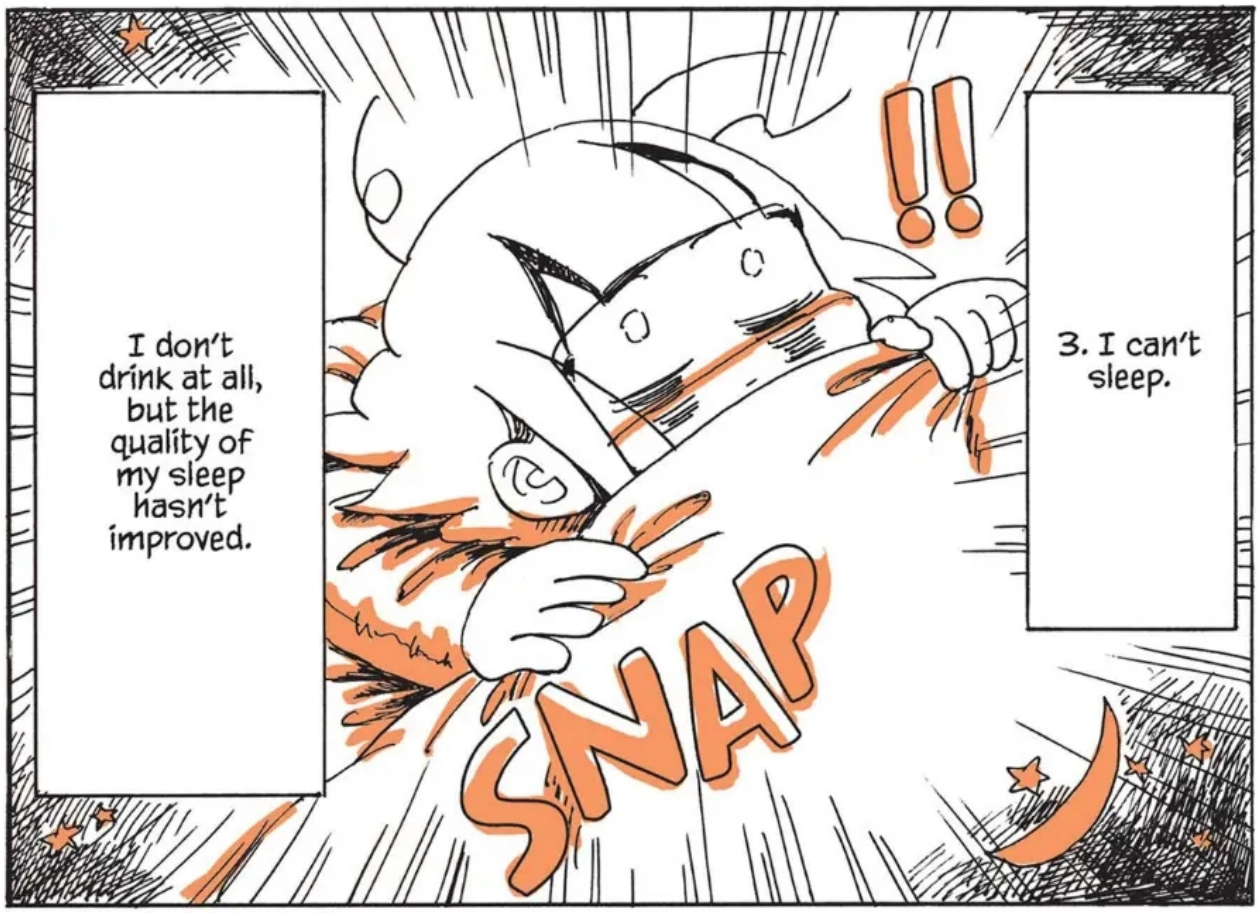

I think this. But I still can't do those things.
THIS MIGHT BE BAD FOR ME AS A MANGA ARTIST...

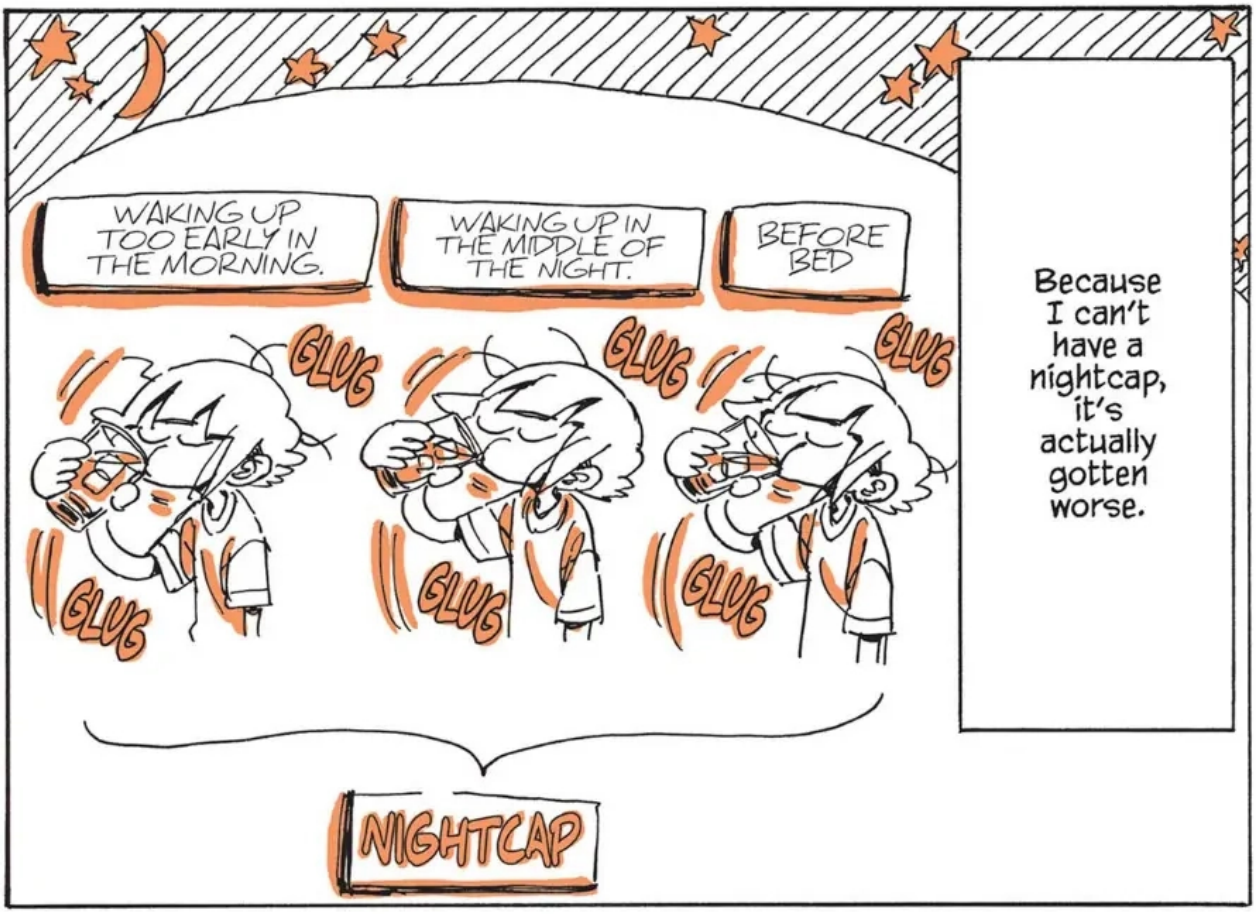

I already hadn't really seen my friends for three years, but the way I can't now really obliterates that record.
LAST-MINUTE CANCELLATION REPEAT OFFENDER
.....
CANCEL CHAMPION
DUN
2. I don't see people much now.

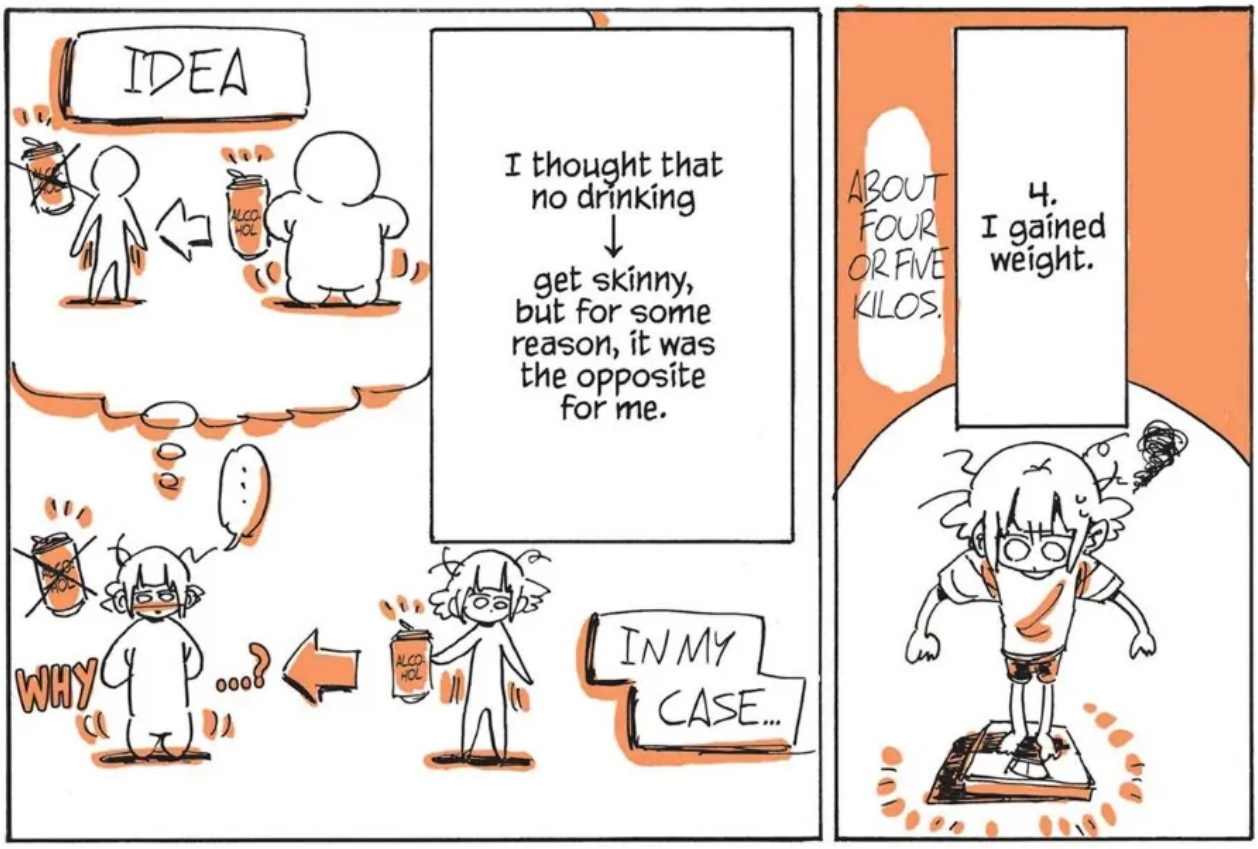
If I couldn't do that...
OKAY!!
AH~~~!!
GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
I used to do this before meeting up with people...

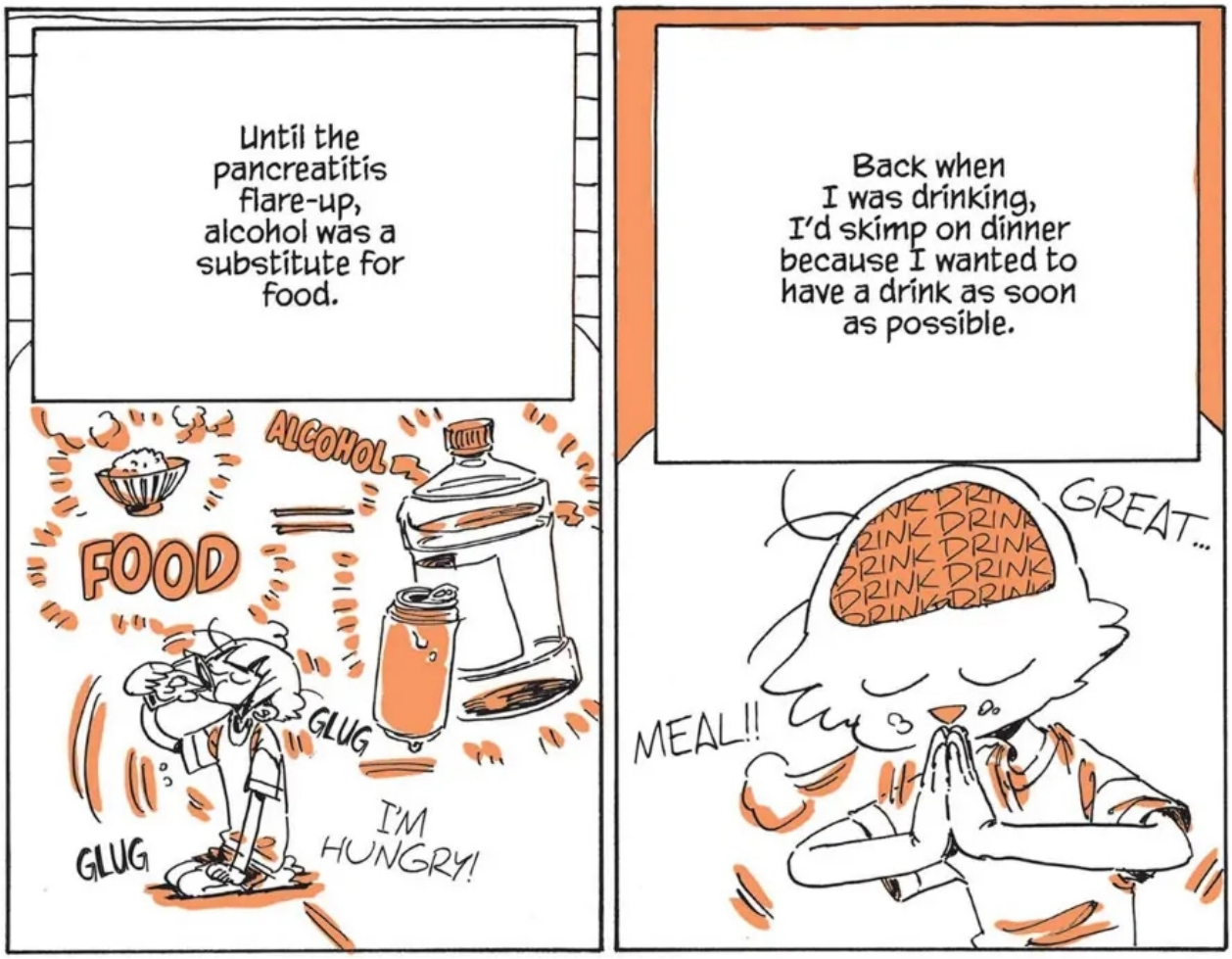

These days, with the pandemic, I no longer have in-person meetings. So I don't see *anyone* now.
.....
ALL ALONE


even if I made plans with a friend, I'd be stricken down by some illness the day before or that same day and cancel at the last minute.
I'M SORRY!


I don't drink at all, but the quality of my sleep hasn't improved.
!!
SNAP
3. I can't sleep.


WAKING UP TOO EARLY IN THE MORNING.
WAKING UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.
BEFORE BED
GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
NIGHTCAP
Because I can't have a nightcap, it's actually gotten worse.


IDEA
I thought that no drinking
↓
get skinny, but for some reason, it was the opposite for me.
WHY ...?
IN MY CASE...
4. I gained weight.
ABOUT FOUR OR FIVE KILOS.


Until the pancreatitis flare-up, alcohol was a substitute for food.
ALCOHOL
FOOD
GLUG
GLUG
I'M HUNGRY!
Back when I was drinking, I'd skimp on dinner because I wanted to have a drink as soon as possible.
GREAT...
MEAL!!

I saw something like this.

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT WHILE DRINKING:
・BUILD IN DAYS OFF.
・MODERATION!!
・TAKE IN XX.

In a tweet from a diet account...

you'd be able to lose a fair bit of weight.
(※*And do a fair bit of damage to your health.*)

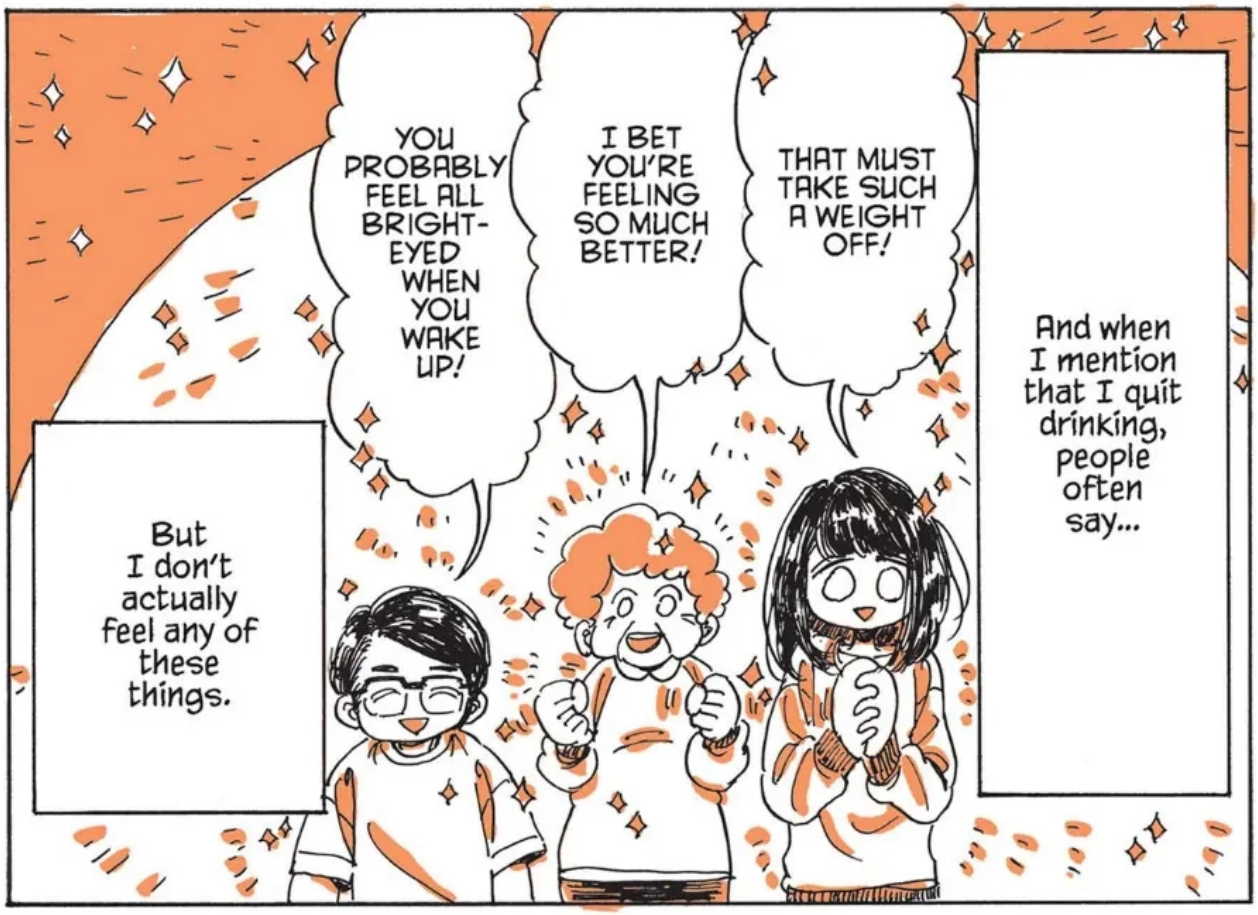
・NO DAYS OFF. DRINK 24/7, 365 DAYS A YEAR.
・DRINK TO EXCESS.
・DRINK INSTEAD OF EATING.

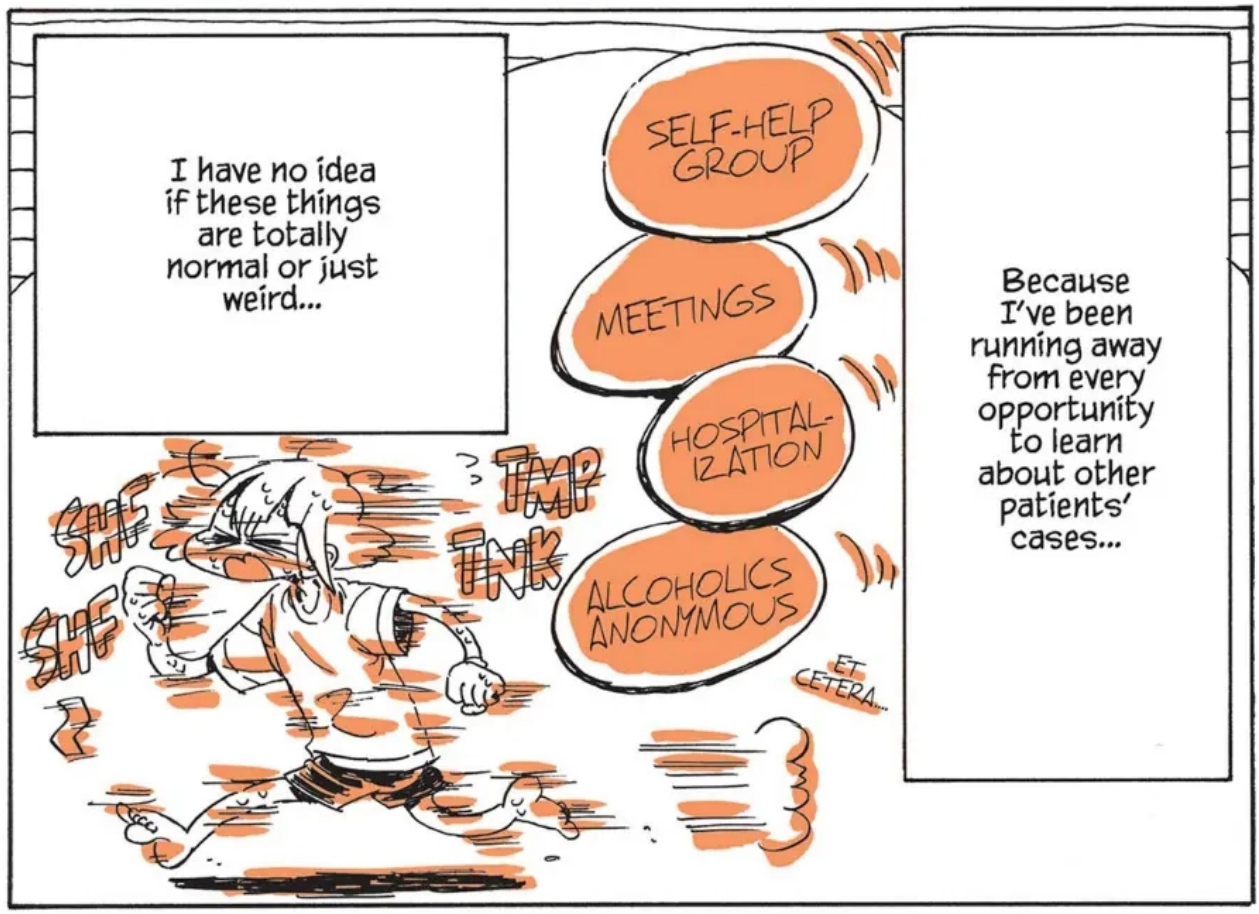
If I were forced to say...

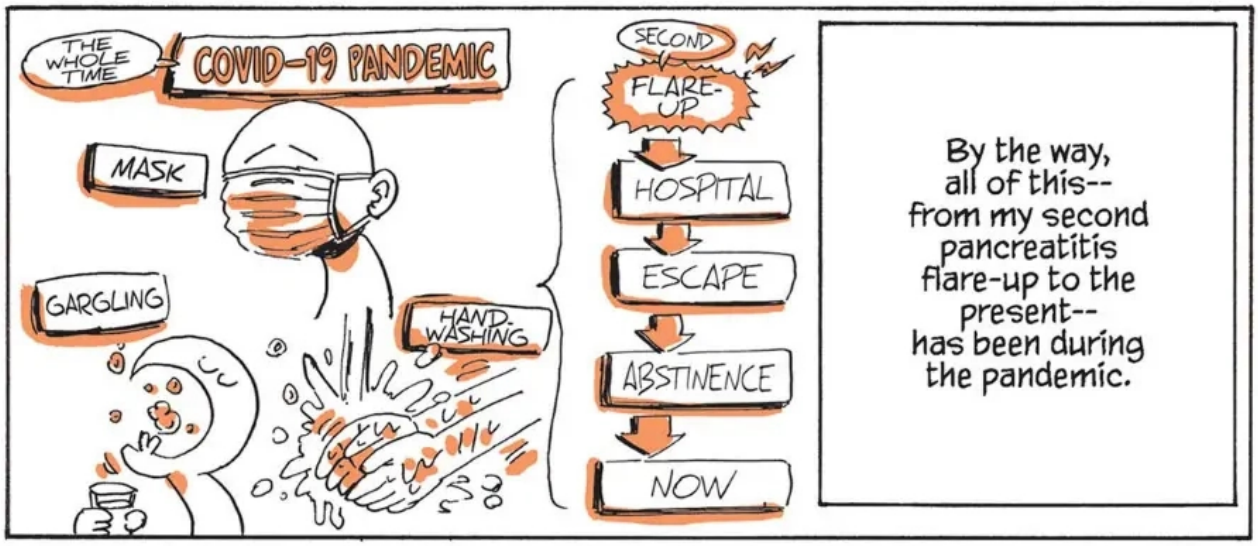
SO MANY WAYS!!

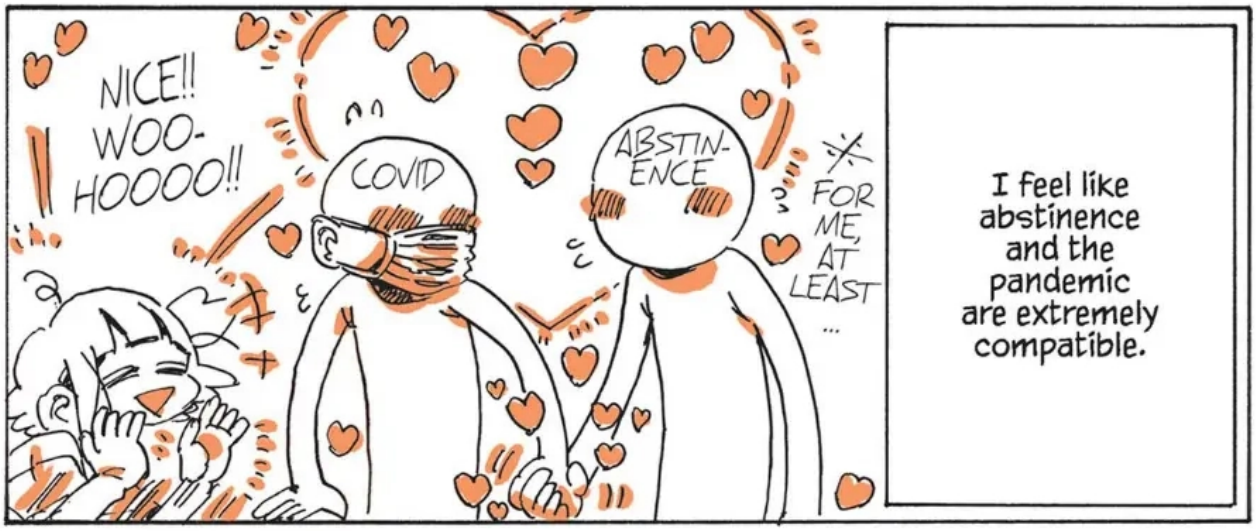
This is a bit off-topic, but the drawbacks were more far-reaching than the benefits.

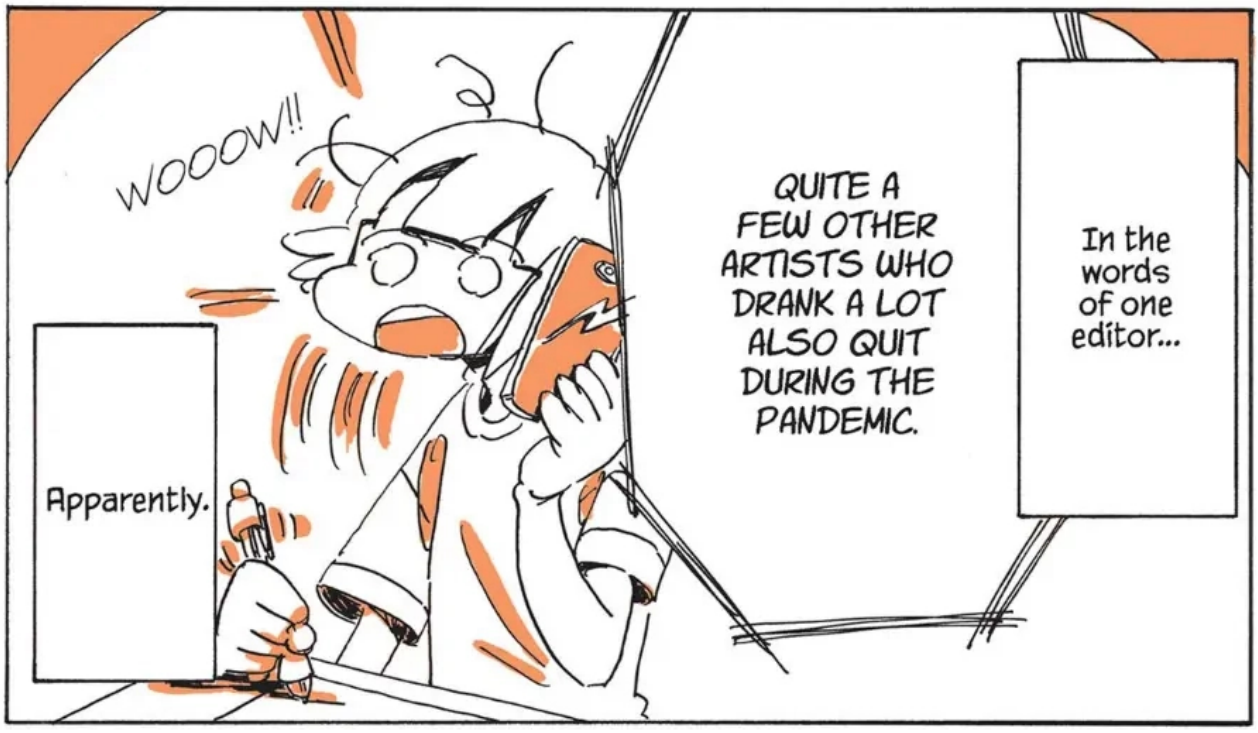
SO ACTIVE IN...

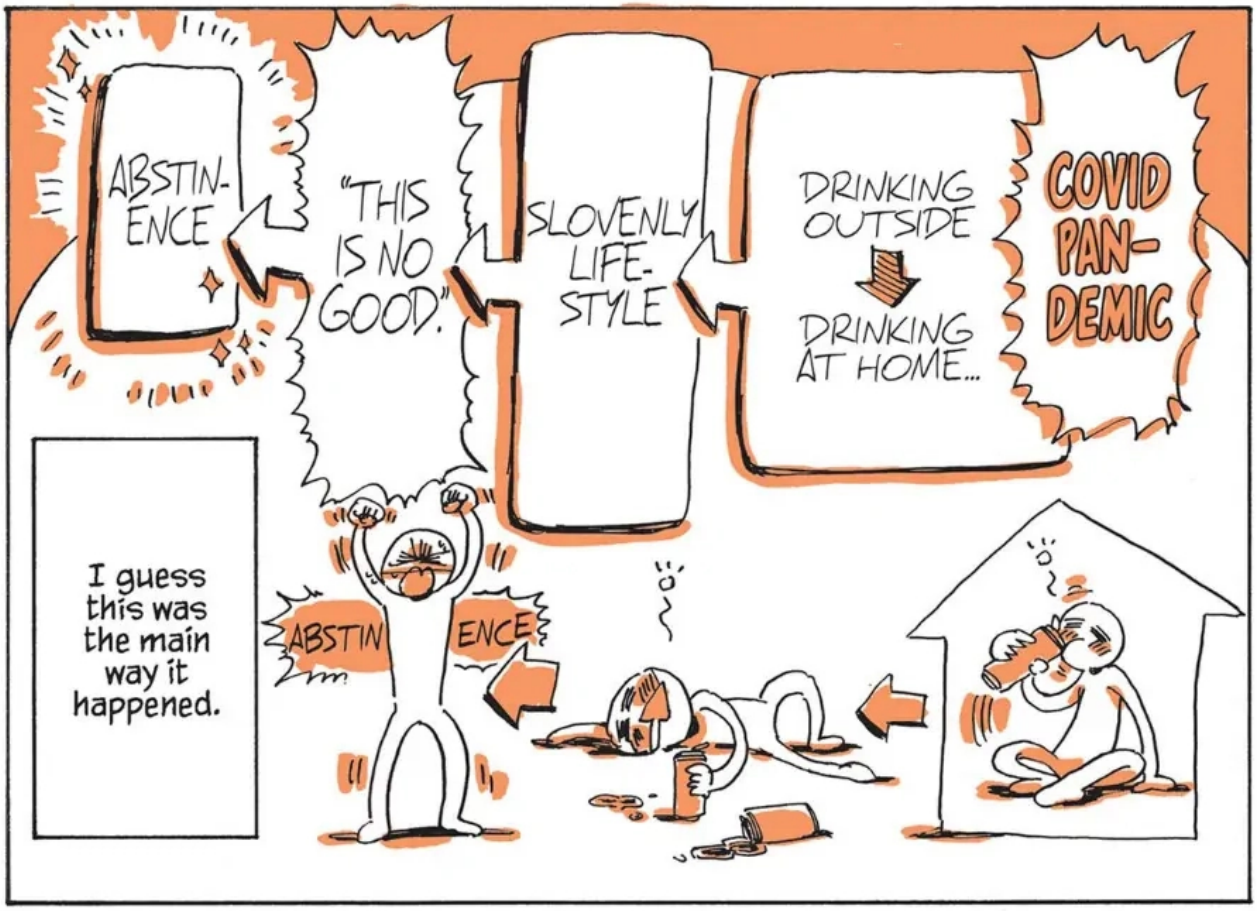

YOU PROBABLY FEEL ALL BRIGHT-EYED WHEN YOU WAKE UP!
I BET YOU'RE FEELING SO MUCH BETTER!
THAT MUST TAKE SUCH A WEIGHT OFF!
And when I mention that I quit drinking, people often say...
But I don't actually feel any of these things.

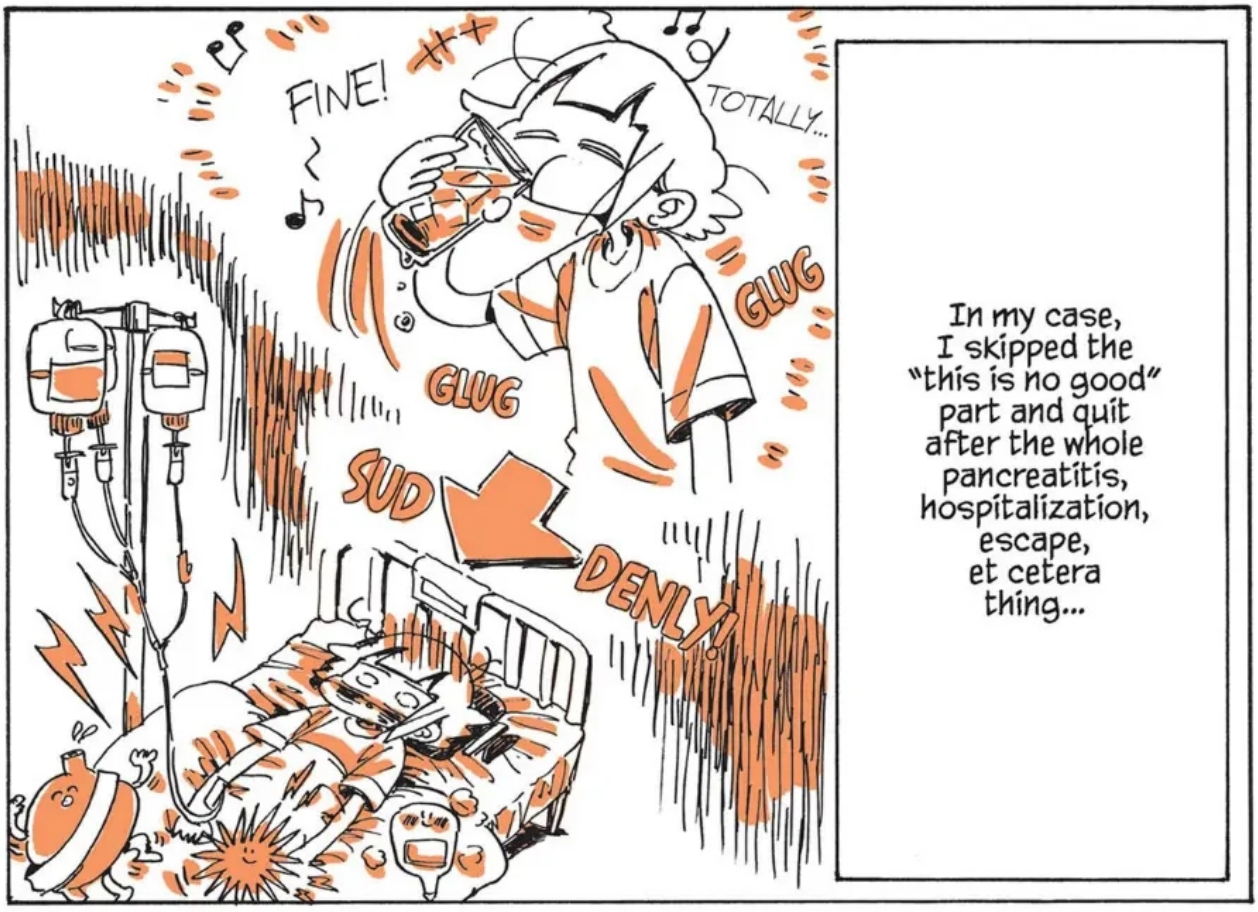

I have no idea if these things are totally normal or just weird...
SELF-HELP GROUP
MEETINGS
HOSPITAL-IZATION
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
ET CETERA...
SHF SHF
TMP TMP TNK
Because I've been running away from every opportunity to learn about other patients' cases...

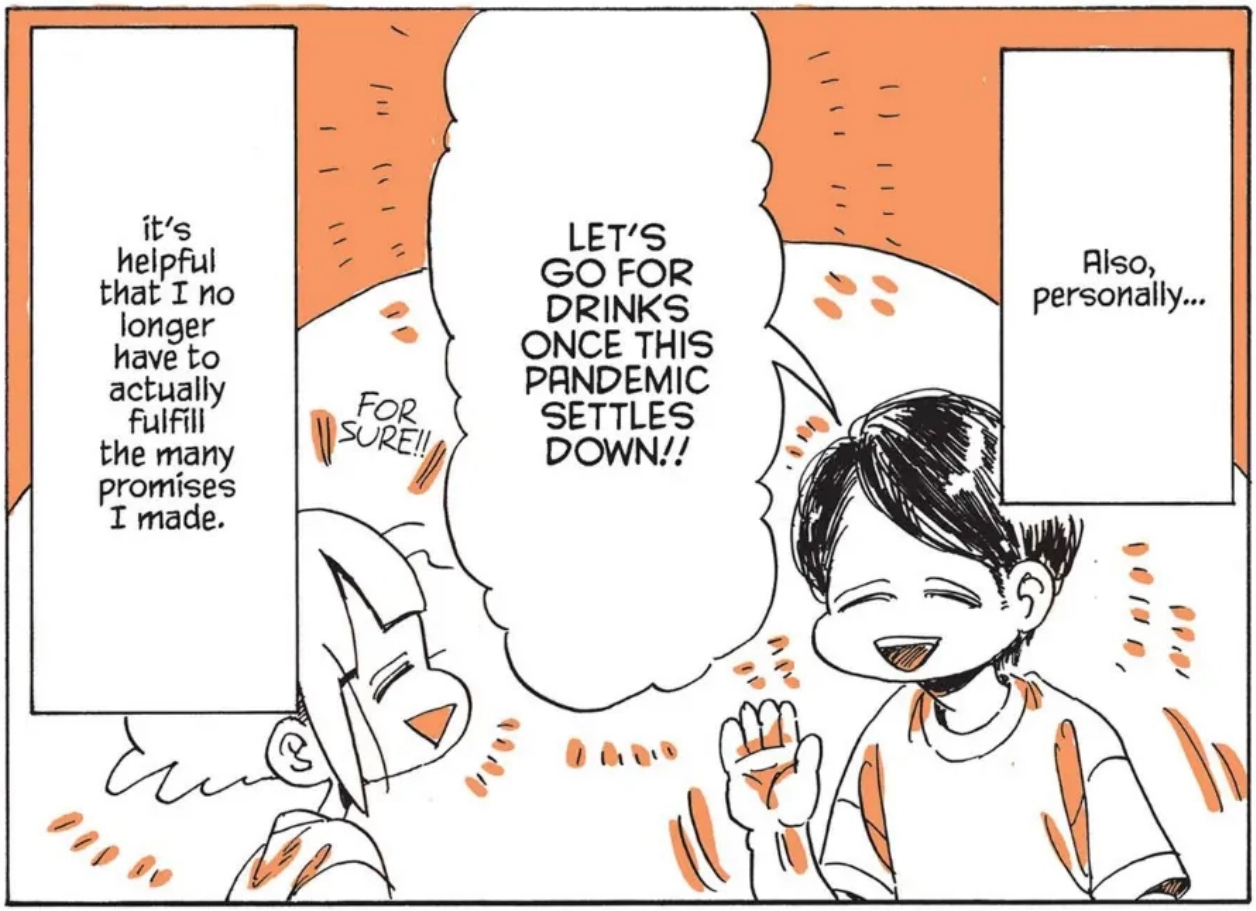

THE WHOLE TIME
COVID-19 PANDEMIC
MASK
GARGLING
HAND-WASHING
SECOND FLARE-UP
HOSPITAL
ESCAPE
ABSTINENCE
NOW
By the way, all of this-- from my second pancreatitis flare-up to the present-- has been during the pandemic.

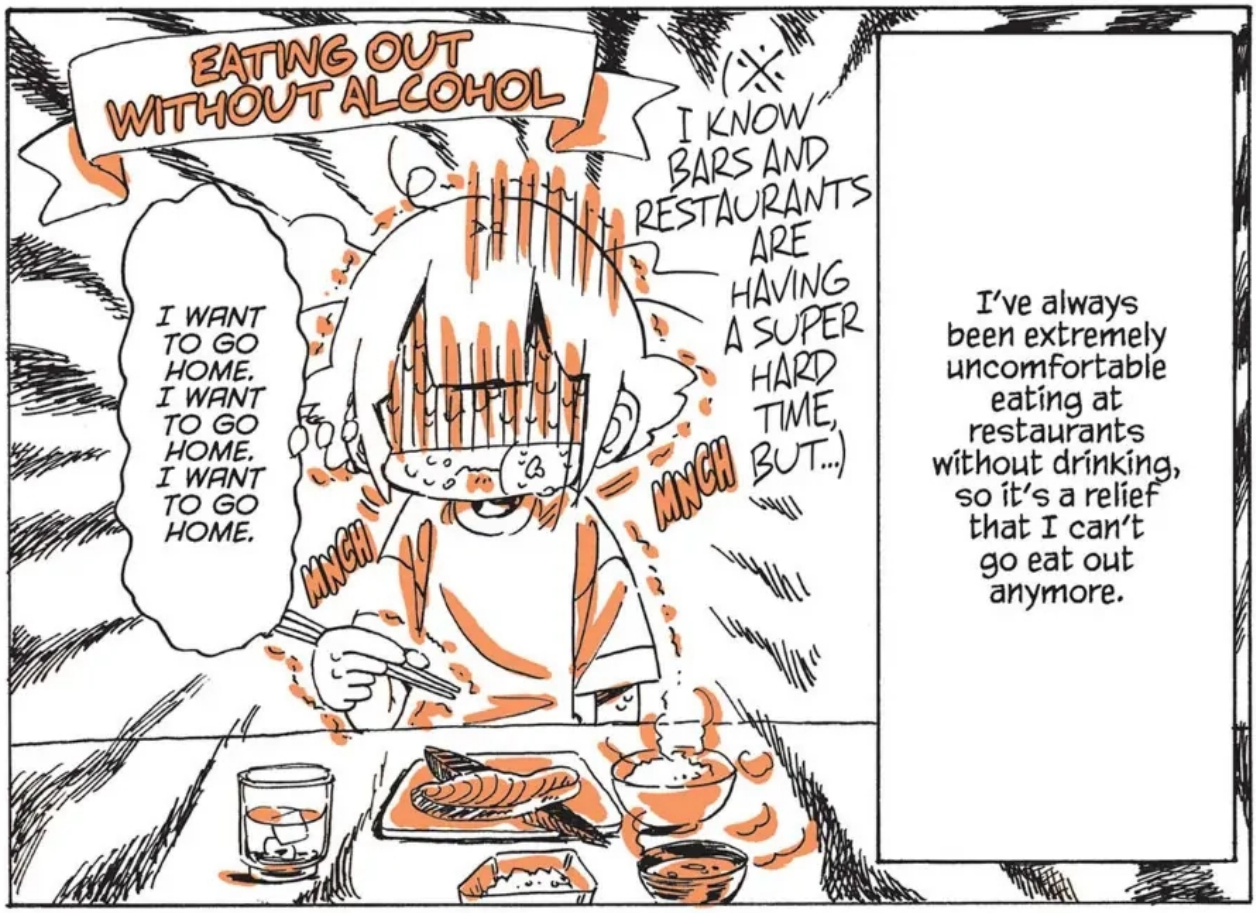

NICE!! WOO-HOOOO!!
COVID
ABSTIN-ENCE
FOR ME, AT LEAST ...
I feel like abstinence and the pandemic are extremely compatible.


WOOOW!!
Apparently.
QUITE A FEW OTHER ARTISTS WHO DRANK A LOT ALSO QUIT DURING THE PANDEMIC.
In the words of one editor...


ABSTIN-
ENCE
"THIS IS NO GOOD."
SLOVENLY LIFE-STYLE
DRINKING OUTSIDE
DRINKING AT HOME...
COVID PAN-DEMIC
I guess this was the main way it happened.
ABSTIN
ENCE


FINE!
TOTALLY...
GLUG
GLUG
SUD
DENLY!!
In my case, I skipped the "this is no good" part and quit after the whole pancreatitis, hospitalization, escape, et cetera thing...

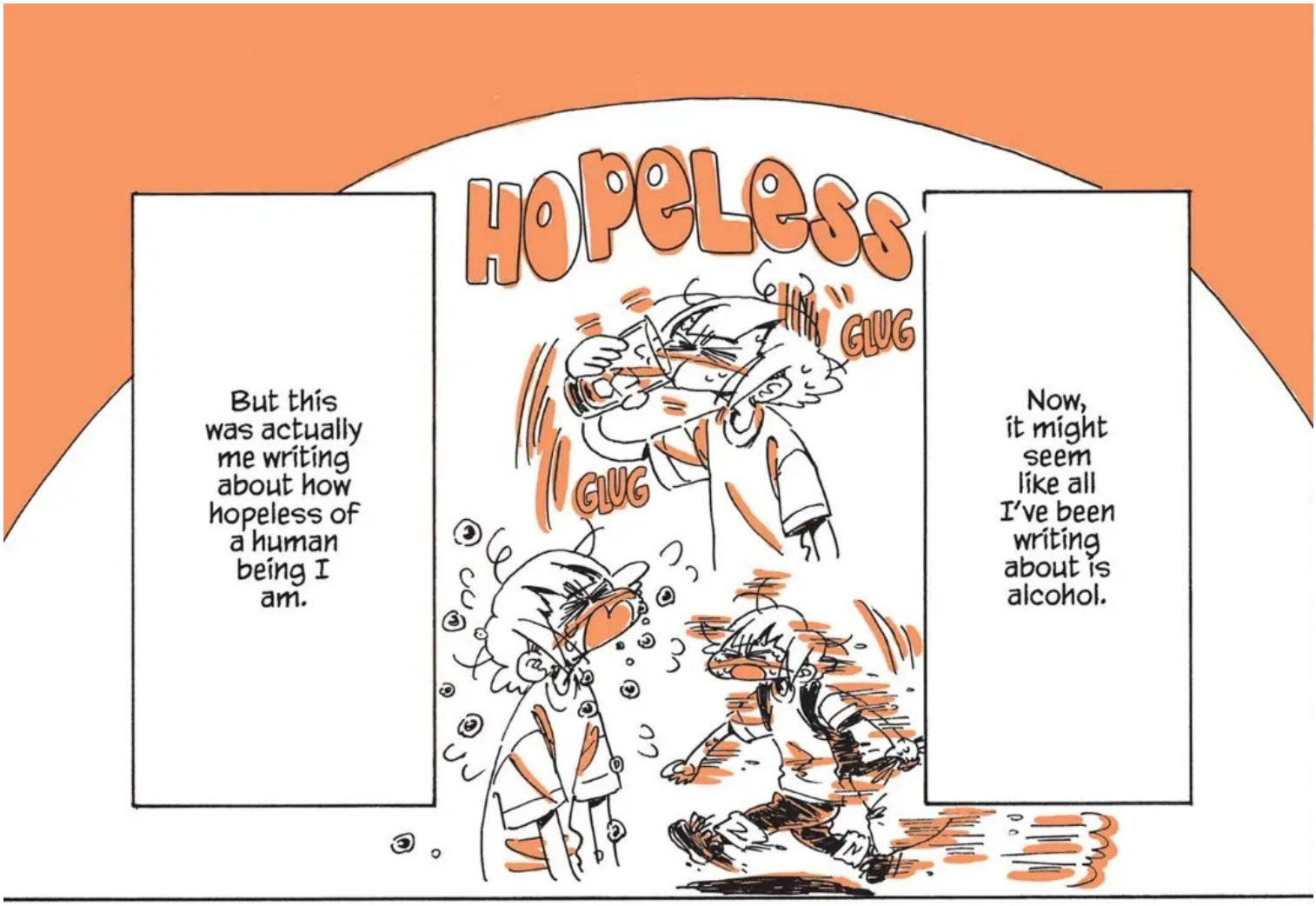

it's helpful that I no longer have to actually fulfill the many promises I made.
FOR SURE!!
LET'S GO FOR DRINKS ONCE THIS PANDEMIC SETTLES DOWN!!
Also, personally...

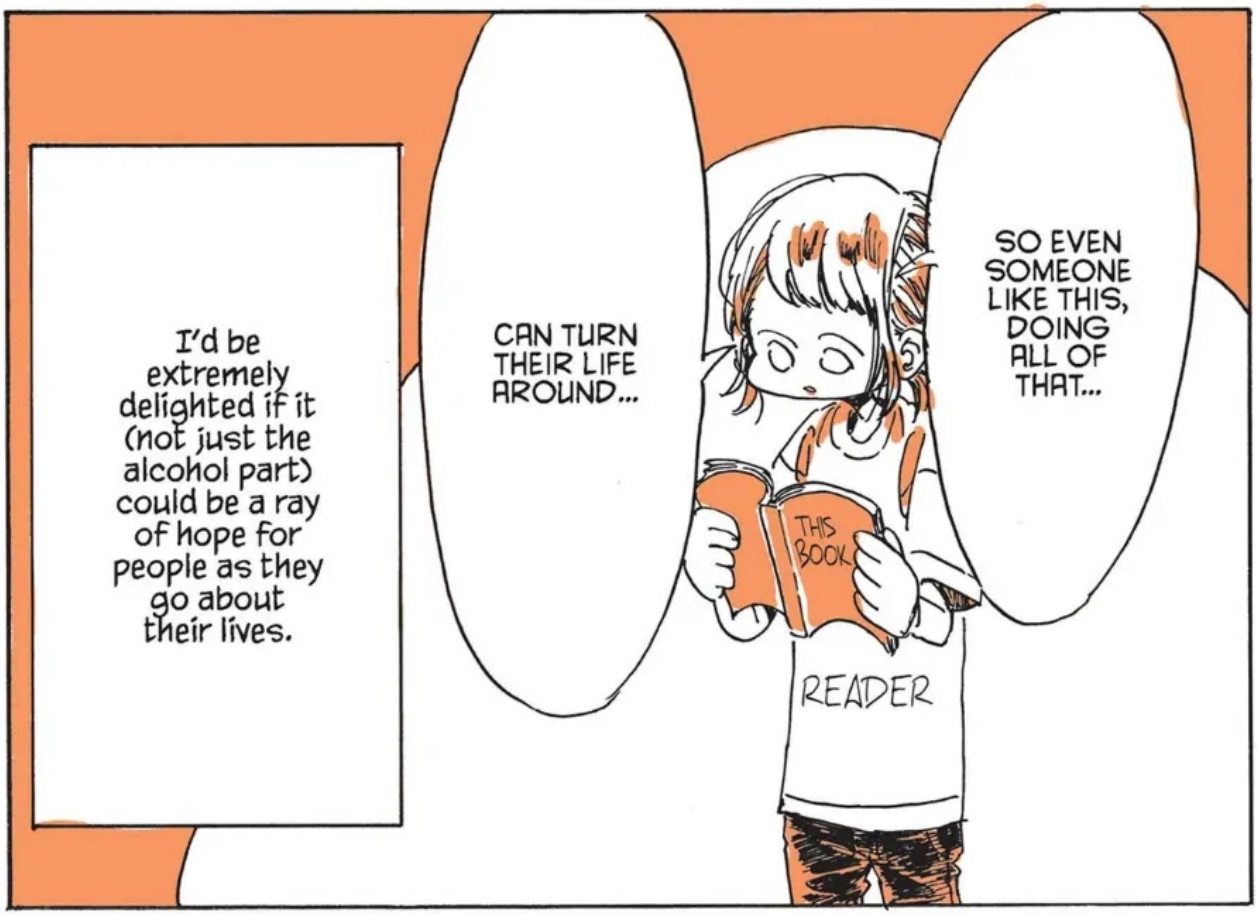

EATING OUT WITHOUT ALCOHOL
I WANT TO GO HOME. I WANT TO GO HOME. I WANT TO GO HOME.
(※I KNOW BARS AND RESTAURANTS ARE HAVING A SUPER HARD TIME, BUT...)
MNGH
MNGH
I've always been extremely uncomfortable eating at restaurants without drinking, so it's a relief that I can't go eat out anymore.

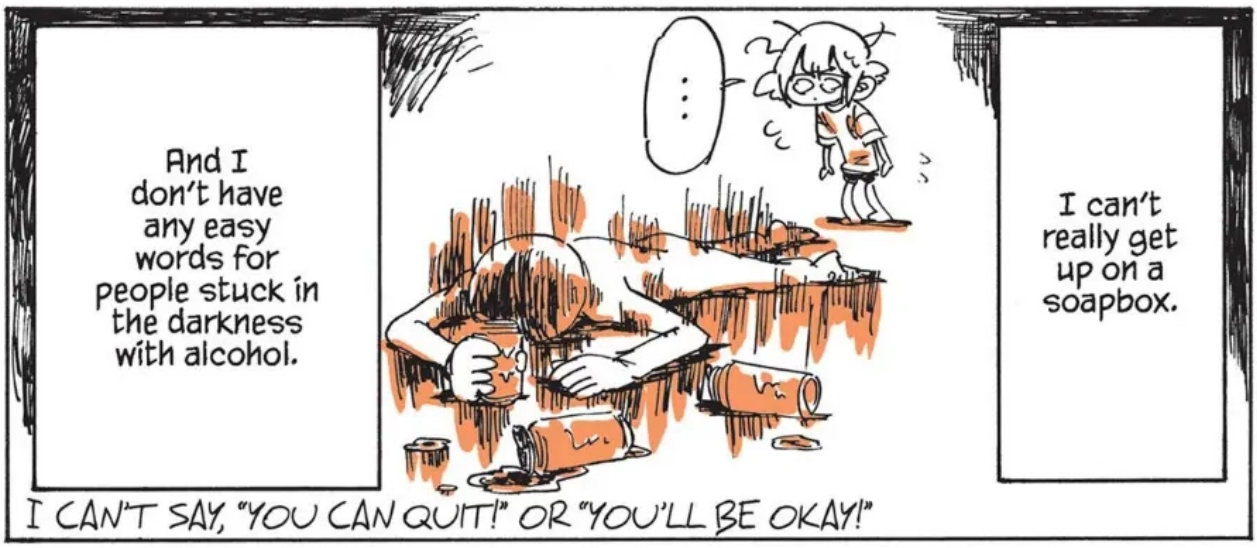
I FINALLY GOT IT FAIRLY RECENTLY...
NO DRINKING ALLOWED!
And if I hadn't quit drinking, I wouldn't have been able to get the vaccine.
(No drinking on the day of.)

But I really couldn't have.
24 HOURS, 365 DAYS A YEAR!!
GLUG
GLUG
You might wonder if I couldn't abstain just one day for the vaccine.

ABSTIN
ENCE!!
I think there are probably other people like me who pulled away from drinking during the pandemic. But there are also people who drowned themselves in alcohol because of it.

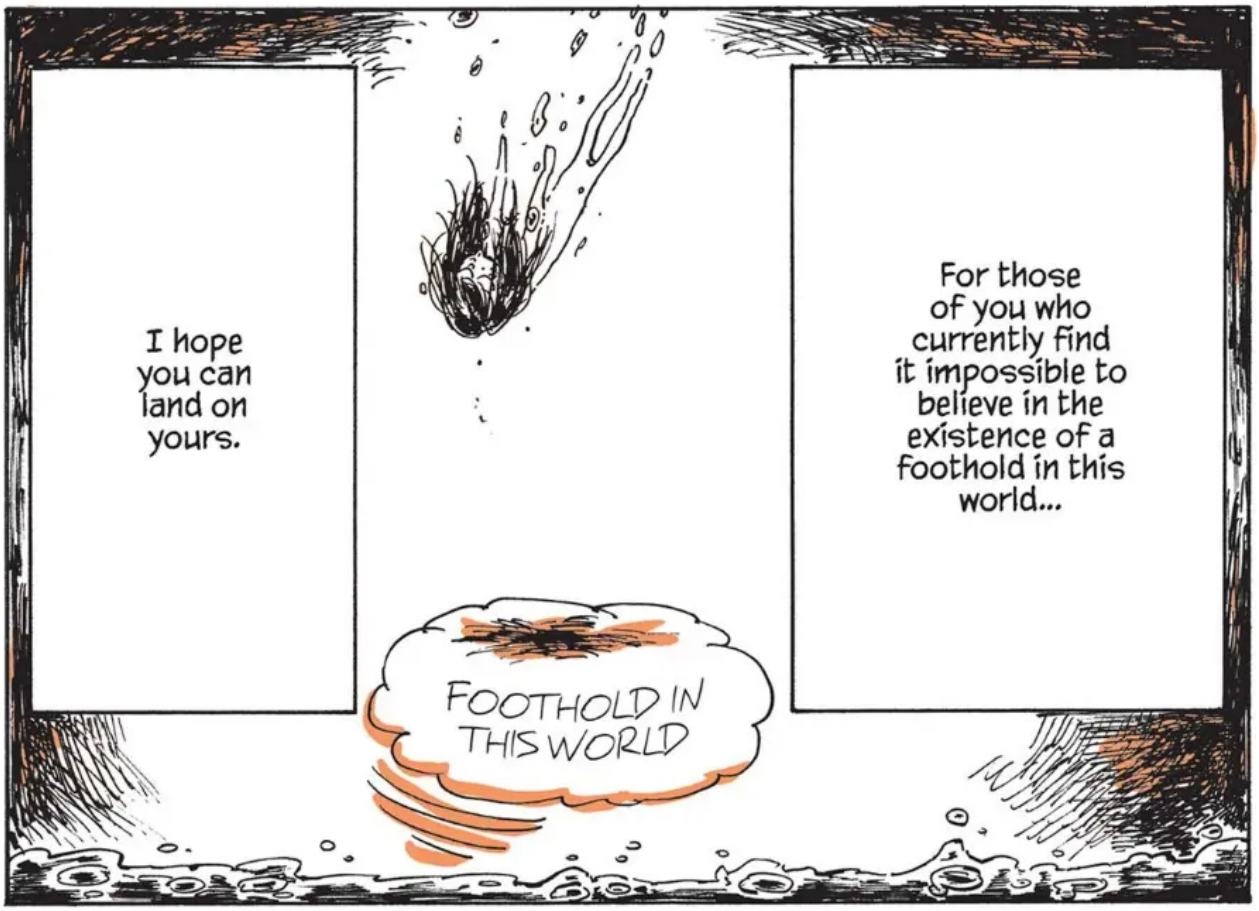

But this was actually me writing about how hopeless of a human being I am.
HOPELESS
GLUG
GLUG
Now, it might seem like all I've been writing about is alcohol.

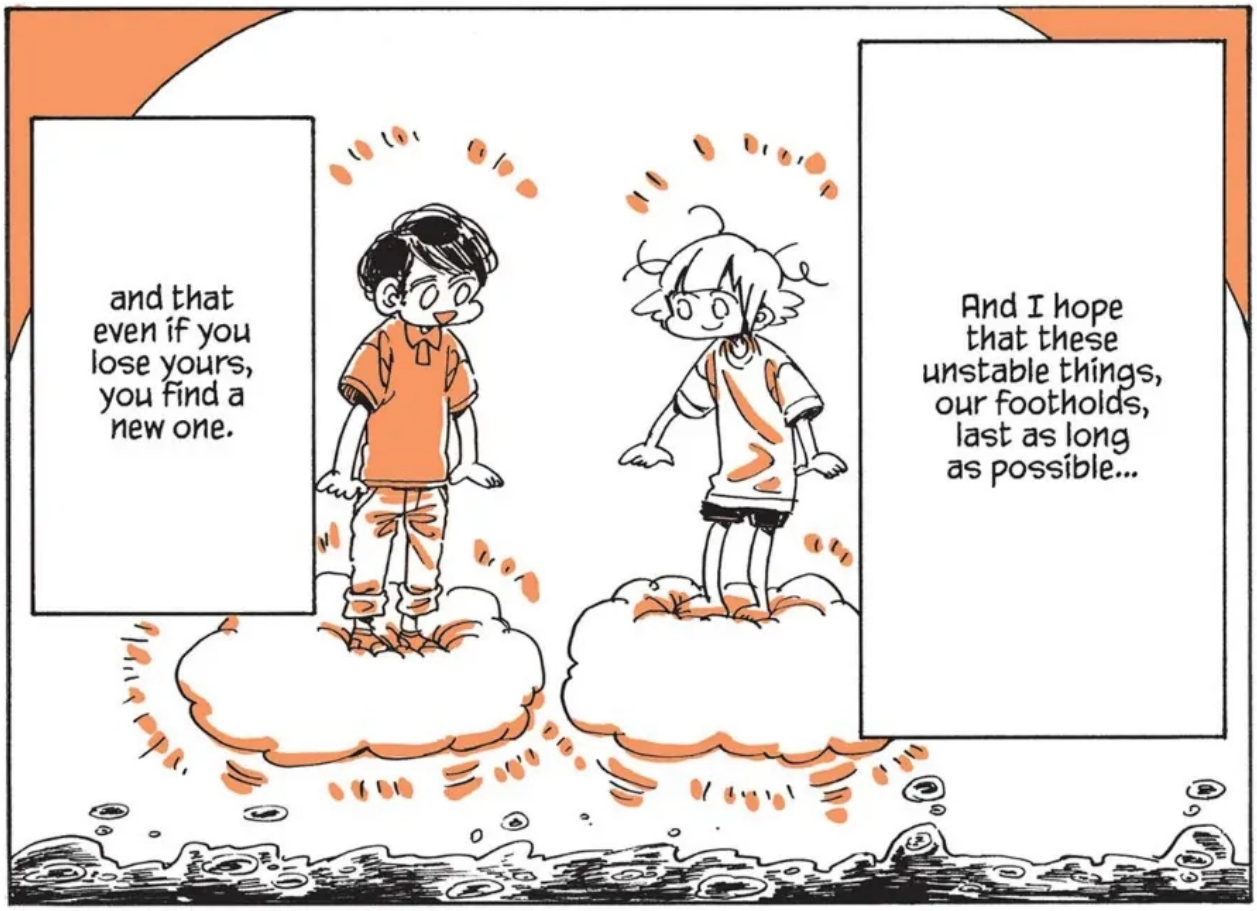

I'd be extremely delighted if it (not just the alcohol part) could be a ray of hope for people as they go about their lives.
CAN TURN THEIR LIFE AROUND...
SO EVEN SOMEONE LIKE THIS, DOING ALL OF THAT...
THIS BOOK
READER


And I don't have any easy words for people stuck in the darkness with alcohol.
...
I can't really get up on a soapbox.
I CAN'T SAY, "YOU CAN QUIT!" OR "YOU'LL BE OKAY!"

That's what I want you to know.
YOU'RE NOT ALONE!!
EVEN IF I DON'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO INTERACT WITH YOU DIRECTLY!!
PANCREAS
But on behalf of everyone who's in the quitting process with me and everyone who wants to quit, I'd like to take this moment to say...

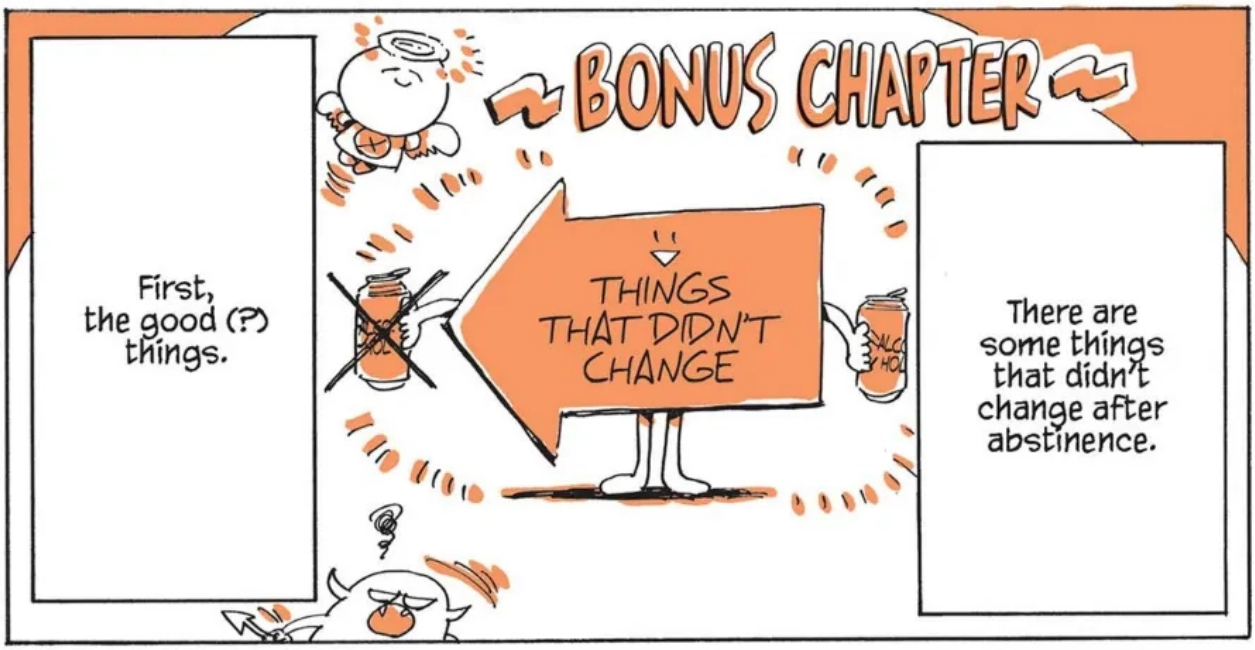
No matter where we are, we're not alone.
ALCO-HOL

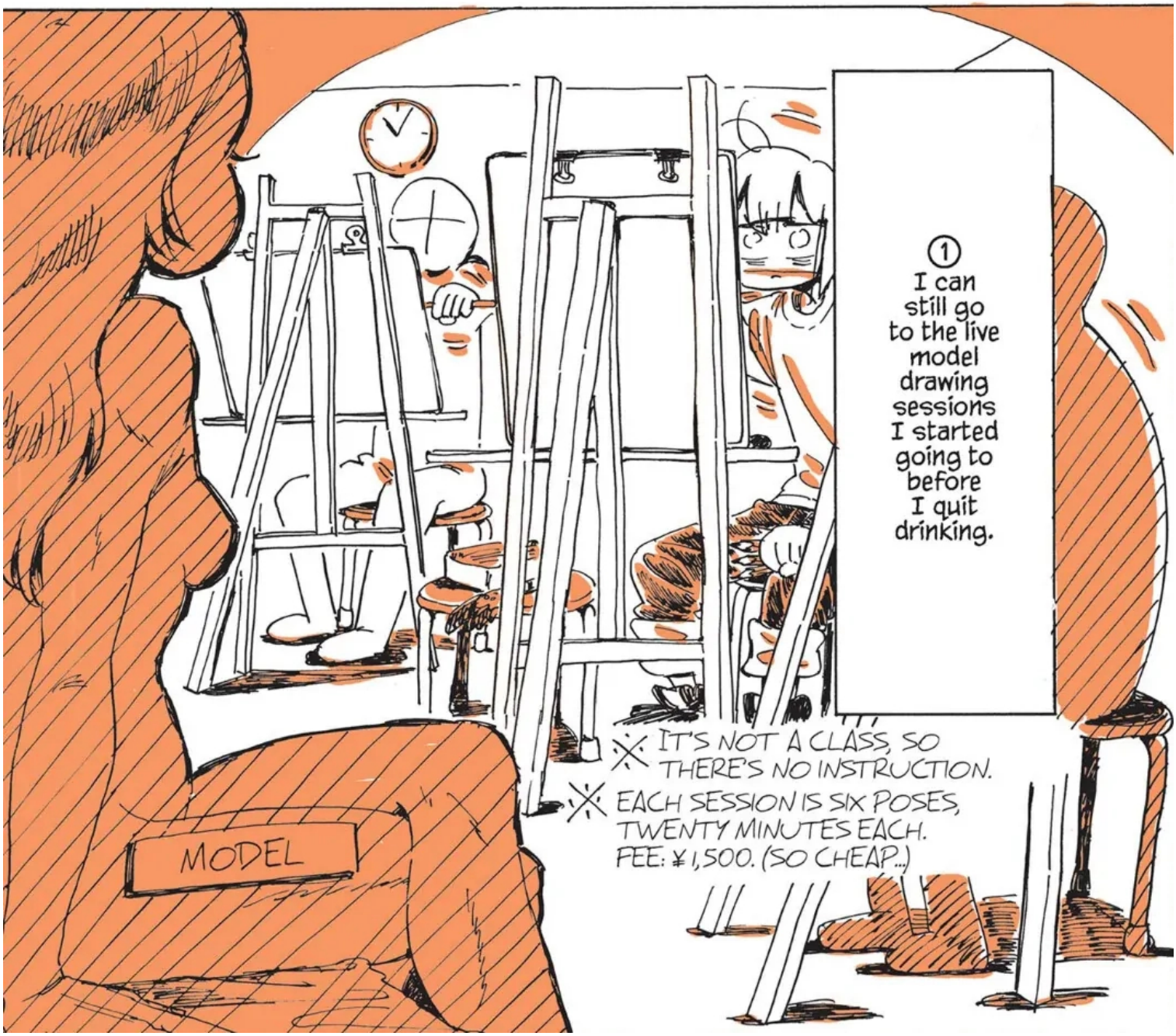

I hope you can land on yours.
For those of you who currently find it impossible to believe in the existence of a foothold in this world...
FOOTHOLD IN THIS WORLD

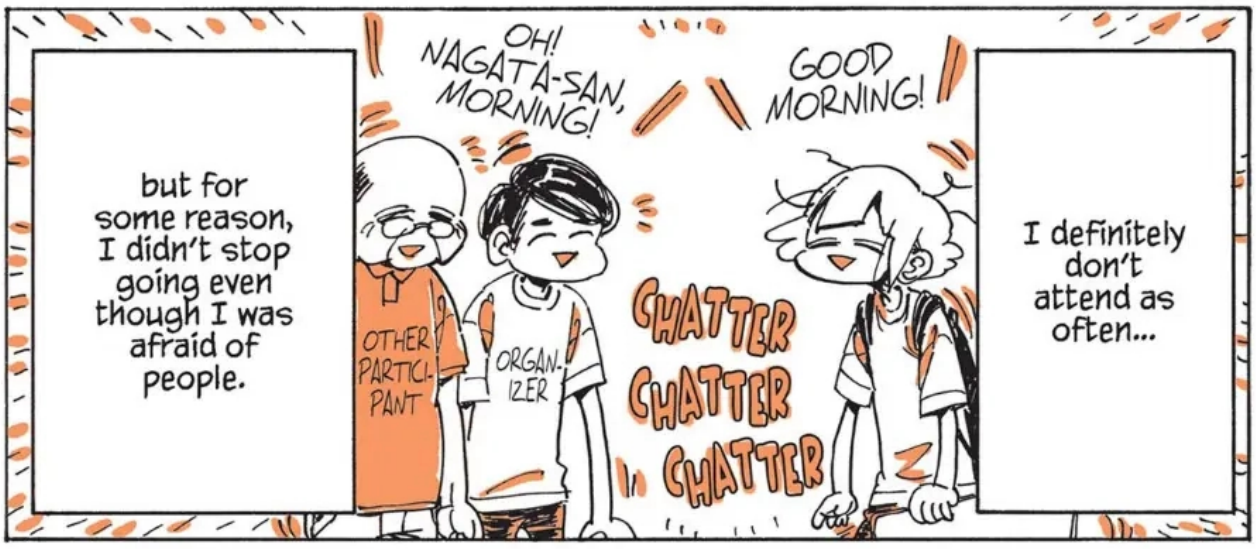

and that even if you lose yours, you find a new one.
And I hope that these unstable things, our footholds, last as long as possible...

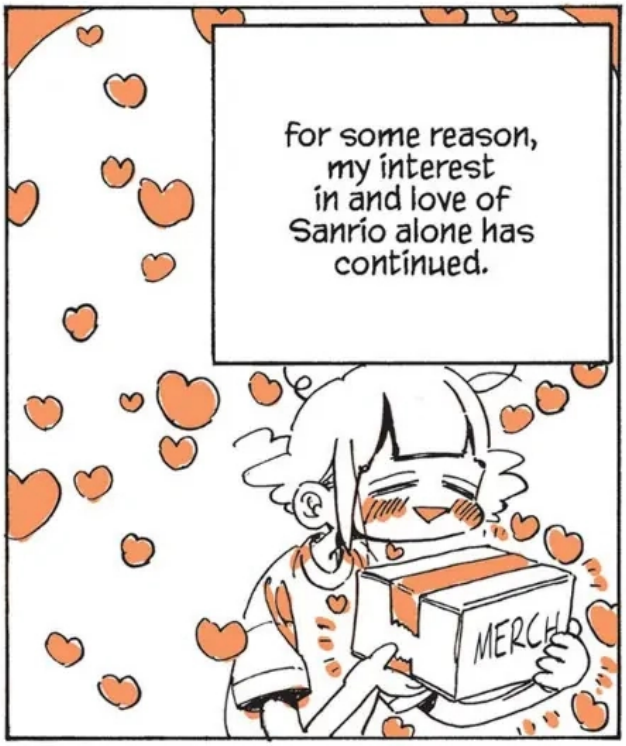
I'd like to conclude this story with that sincere prayer from my heart.
Thank you so much for joining me!!
38.5°
NAUSEA
PANCREAS

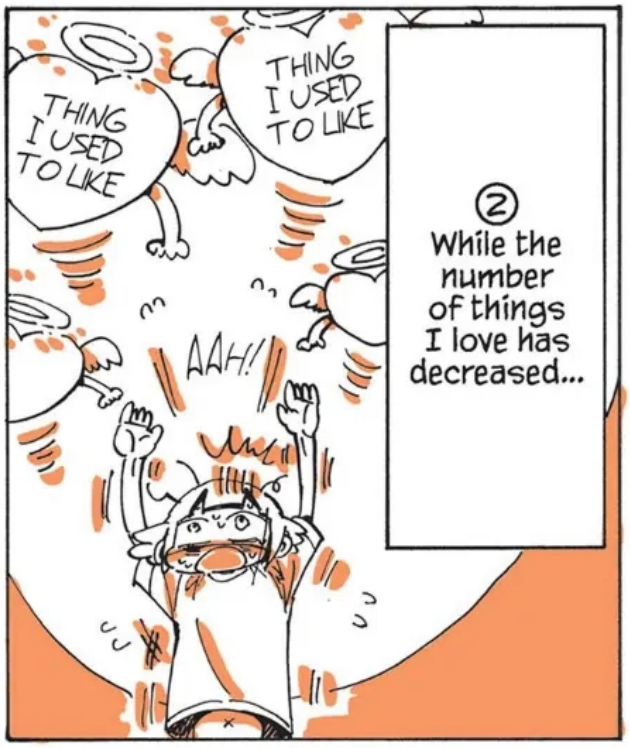
My Pancreas Broke
But My Life
Got Better


BONUS CHAPTER
First, the good (?) things.
THINGS THAT DIDN'T CHANGE
There are some things that didn't change after abstinence.

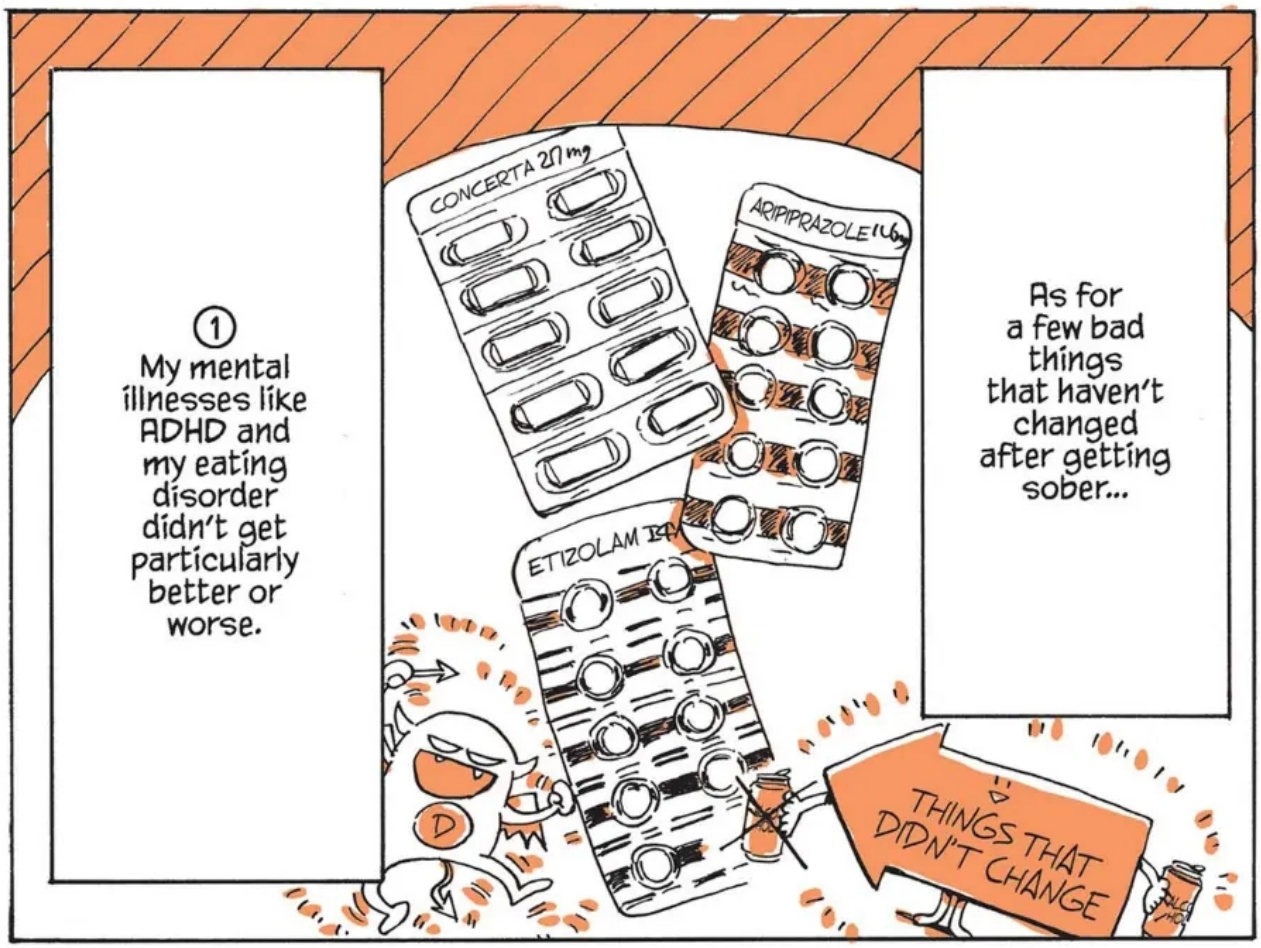

① I can still go to the live model drawing sessions I started going to before I quit drinking.
MODEL
※ IT'S NOT A CLASS, SO THERE'S NO INSTRUCTION.
※ EACH SESSION IS SIX POSES, TWENTY MINUTES EACH. FEE: ¥1,500. (SO CHEAP...)


but for some reason, I didn't stop going even though I was afraid of people.
OH! NAGATA-SAN, MORNING!
GOOD MORNING!
OTHER PARTICI-PANT
ORGAN-IZER
CHATTER CHATTER CHATTER
I definitely don't attend as often...


for some reason, my interest in and love of Sanrio alone has continued.
MERCH


THING I USED TO LIKE
THING I USED TO LIKE
AAH!
② While the number of things I love has decreased...

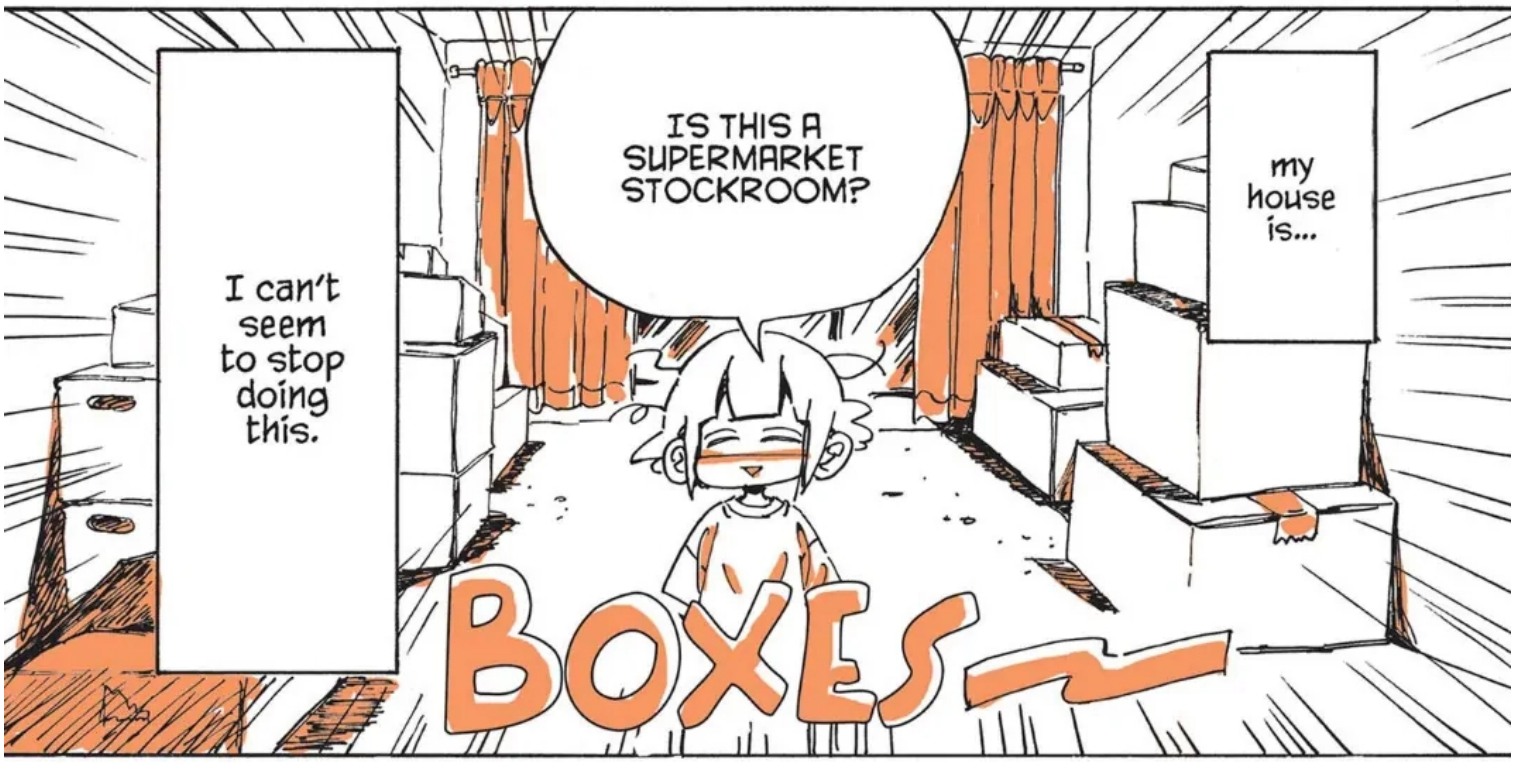
so this is basically my last stronghold.
THINGS I LOVE: NOTHING
The number of things I love really has dropped dramati-cally...

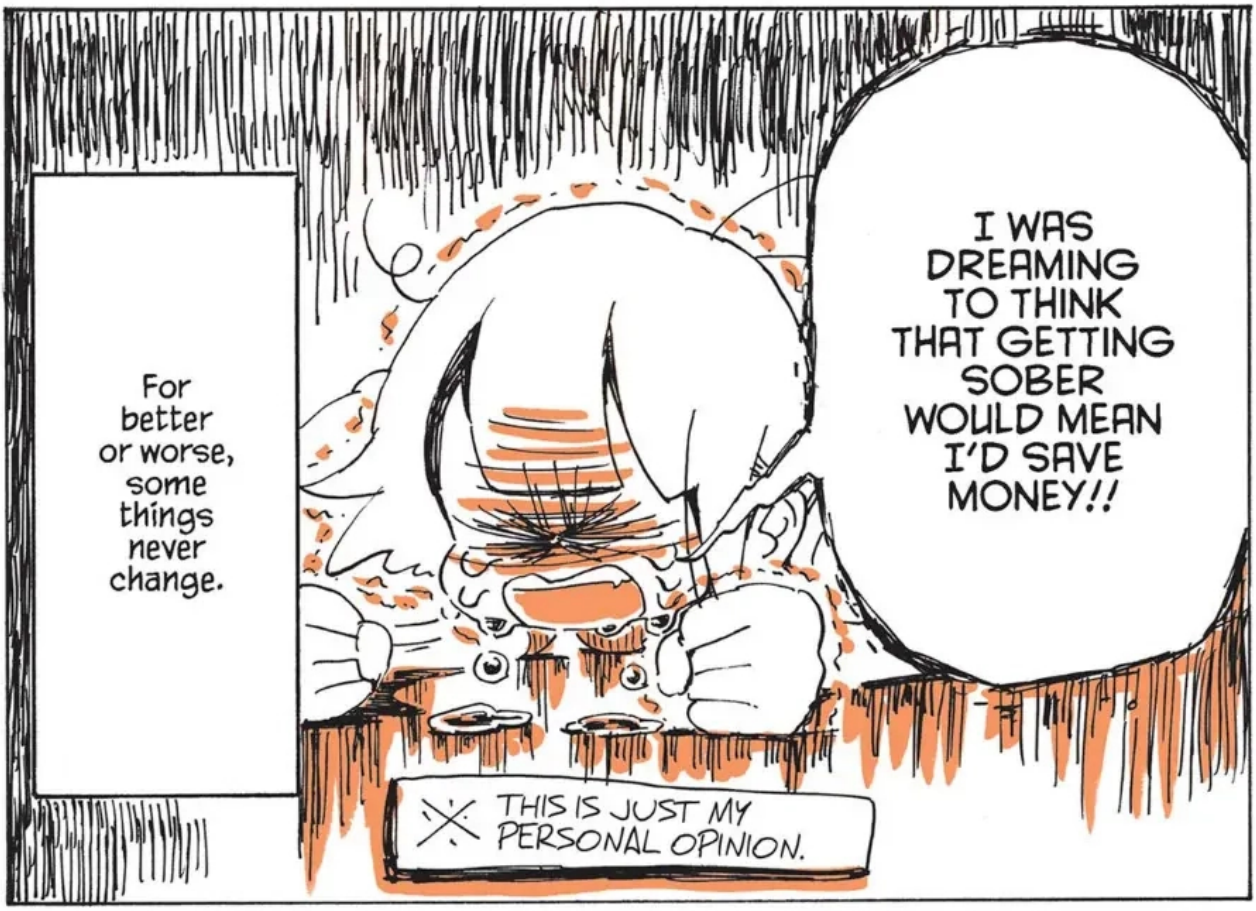

① My mental illnesses like ADHD and my eating disorder didn't get particularly better or worse.
CONCERTA 27mg
ARIPIPRAZOLE 1.5mg
ETIZOLAM 1mg
As for a few bad things that haven't changed after getting sober...
THINGS THAT DIDN'T CHANGE

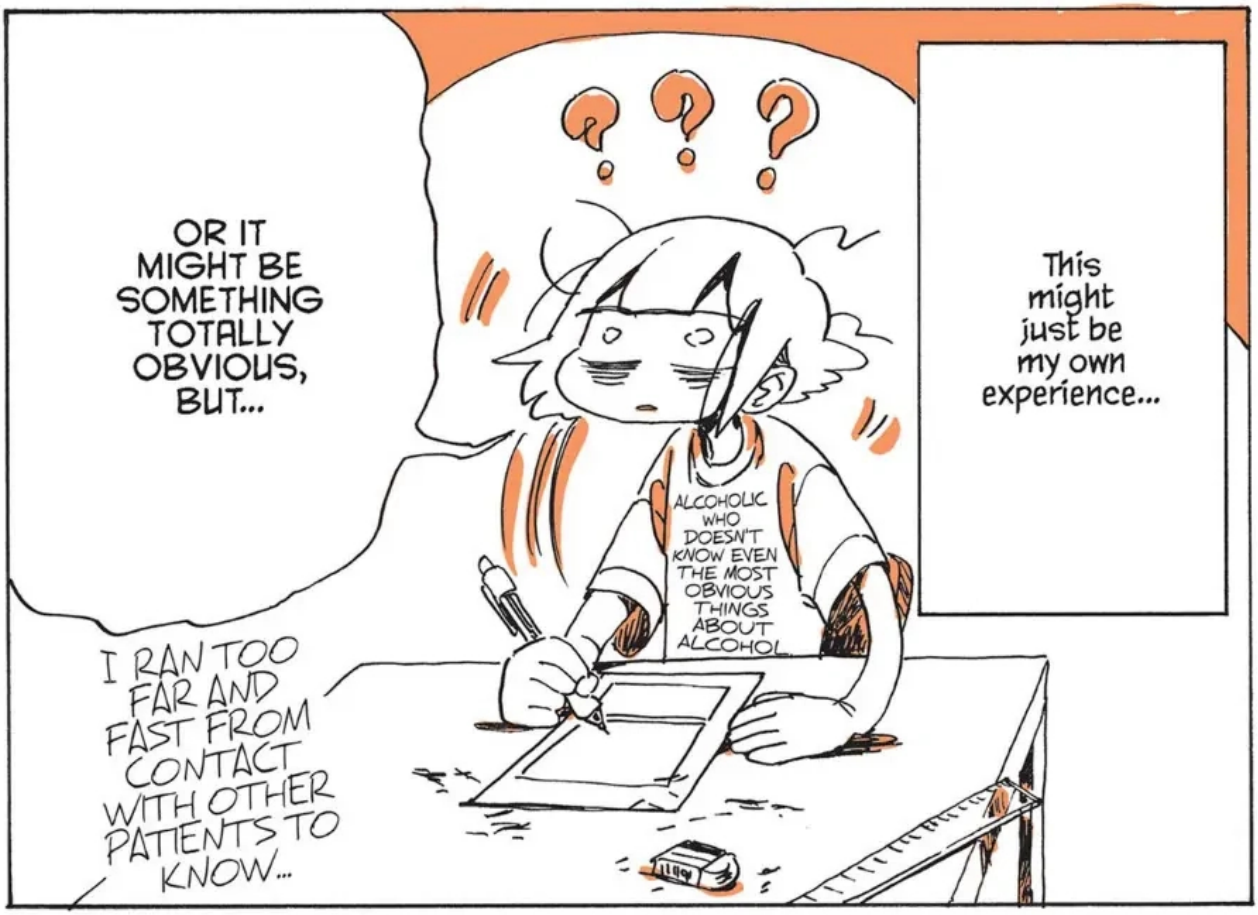
GET BETTER AT LEAST.
If it's gonna be like this...
is what I think.

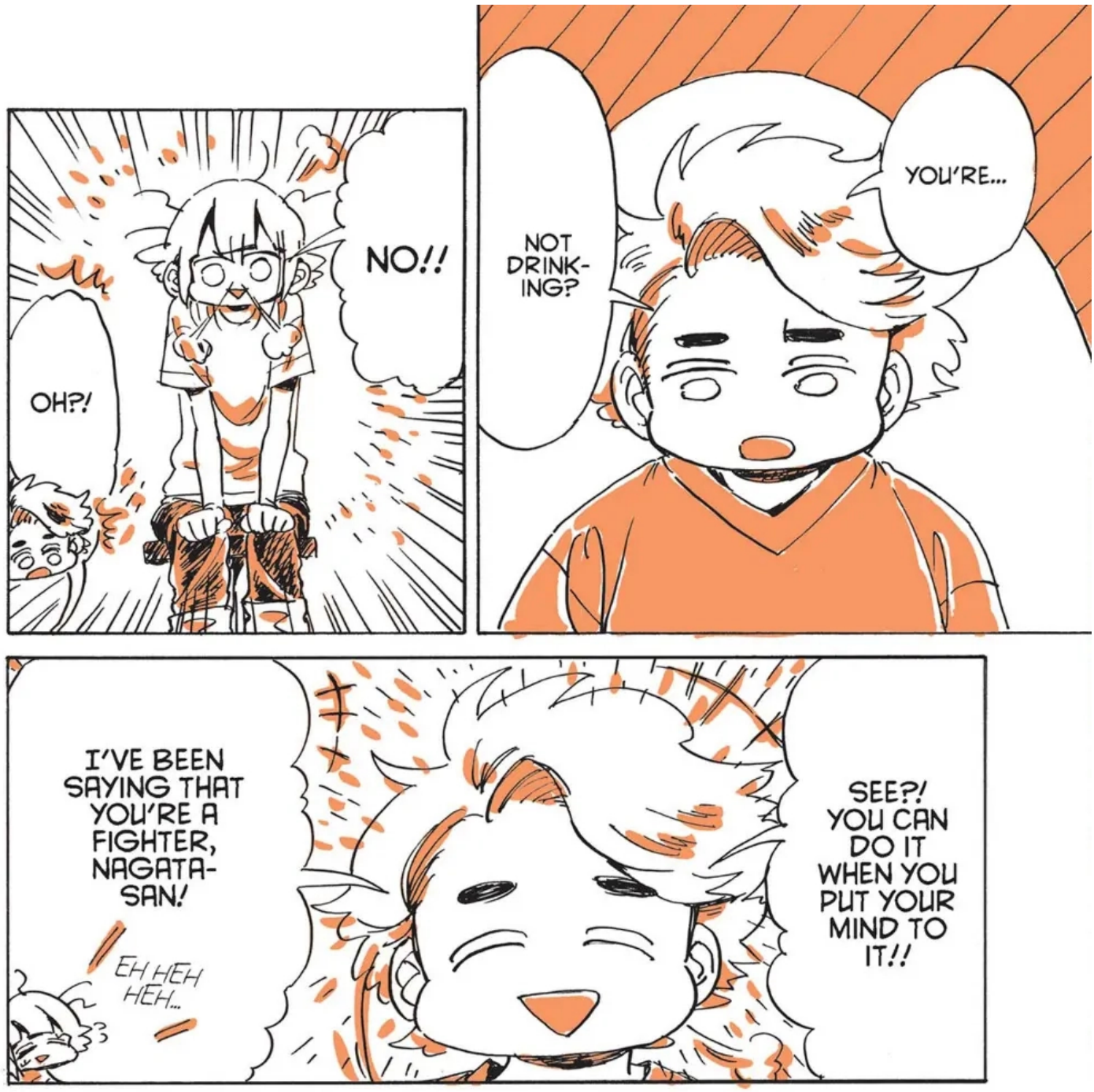
Those haven't changed since I quit drinking either.
¥10000
GOOD-BYE...
AAH!!
② My extravagant habits, the way I waste money so much that I suspect I'm addicted to shopping...

IN BULK
AT THE SUPERMARKET
TAP
ONLINE
Because I buy online, I buy at the supermarket, and I buy in bulk...

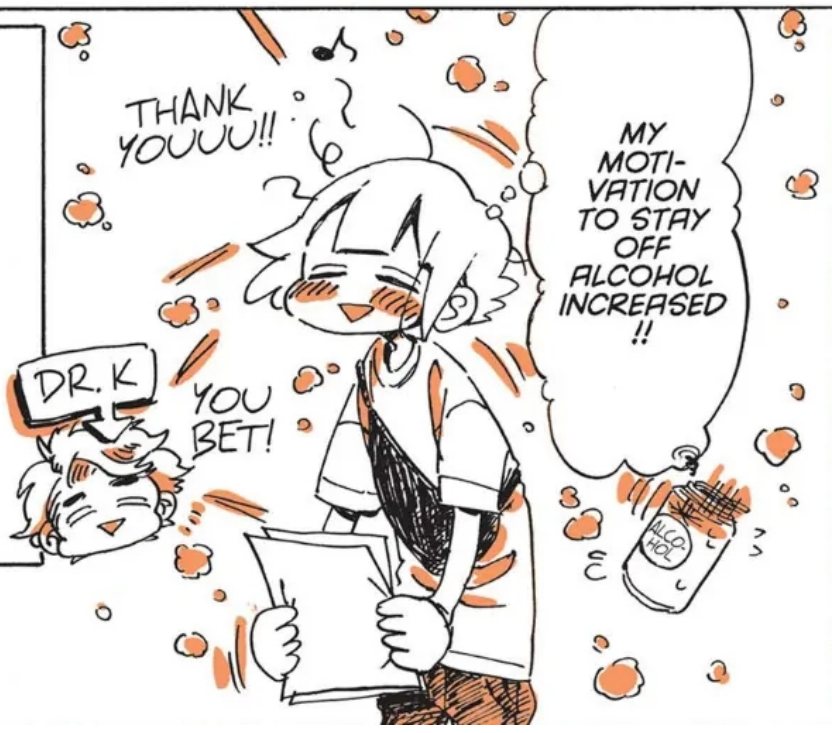

I can't seem to stop doing this.
IS THIS A SUPERMARKET STOCKROOM?
my house is...
BOXES—


For better or worse, some things never change.
I WAS DREAMING TO THINK THAT GETTING SOBER WOULD MEAN I'D SAVE MONEY!!
THIS IS JUST MY PERSONAL OPINION.

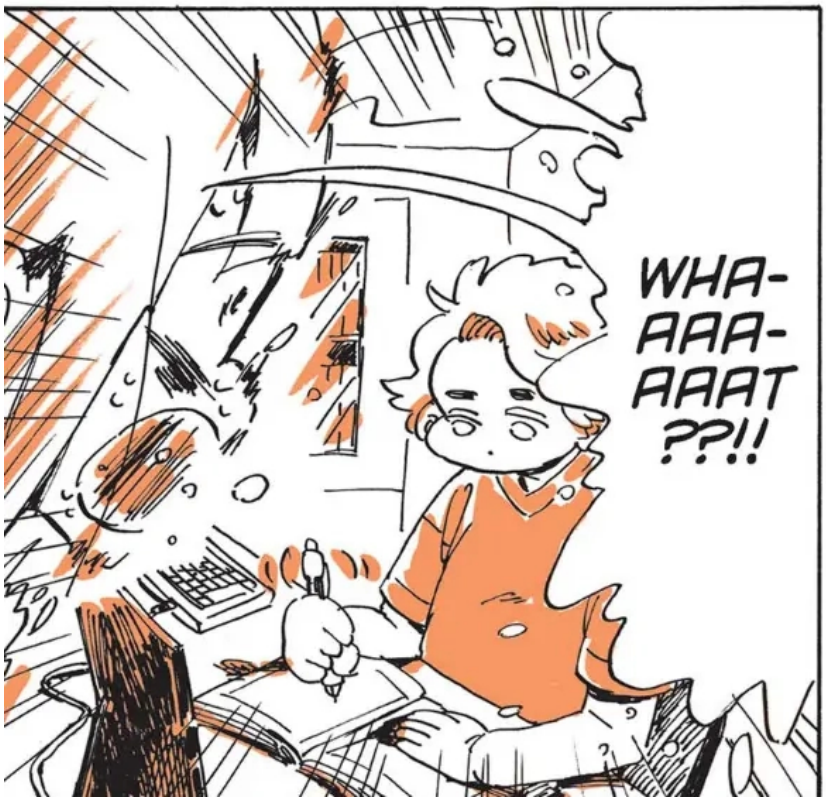

OR IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING TOTALLY OBVIOUS, BUT...
This might just be my own experience...
ALCOHOLIC WHO DOESN'T KNOW EVEN THE MOST OBVIOUS THINGS ABOUT ALCOHOL
I RAN TOO FAR AND FAST FROM CONTACT WITH OTHER PATIENTS TO KNOW...


NO!!
OH?!
NOT DRINK-ING?
YOU'RE...
I'VE BEEN SAYING THAT YOU'RE A FIGHTER, NAGATA-SAN!
EH HEH HEH...
SEE?! YOU CAN DO IT WHEN YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO IT!!

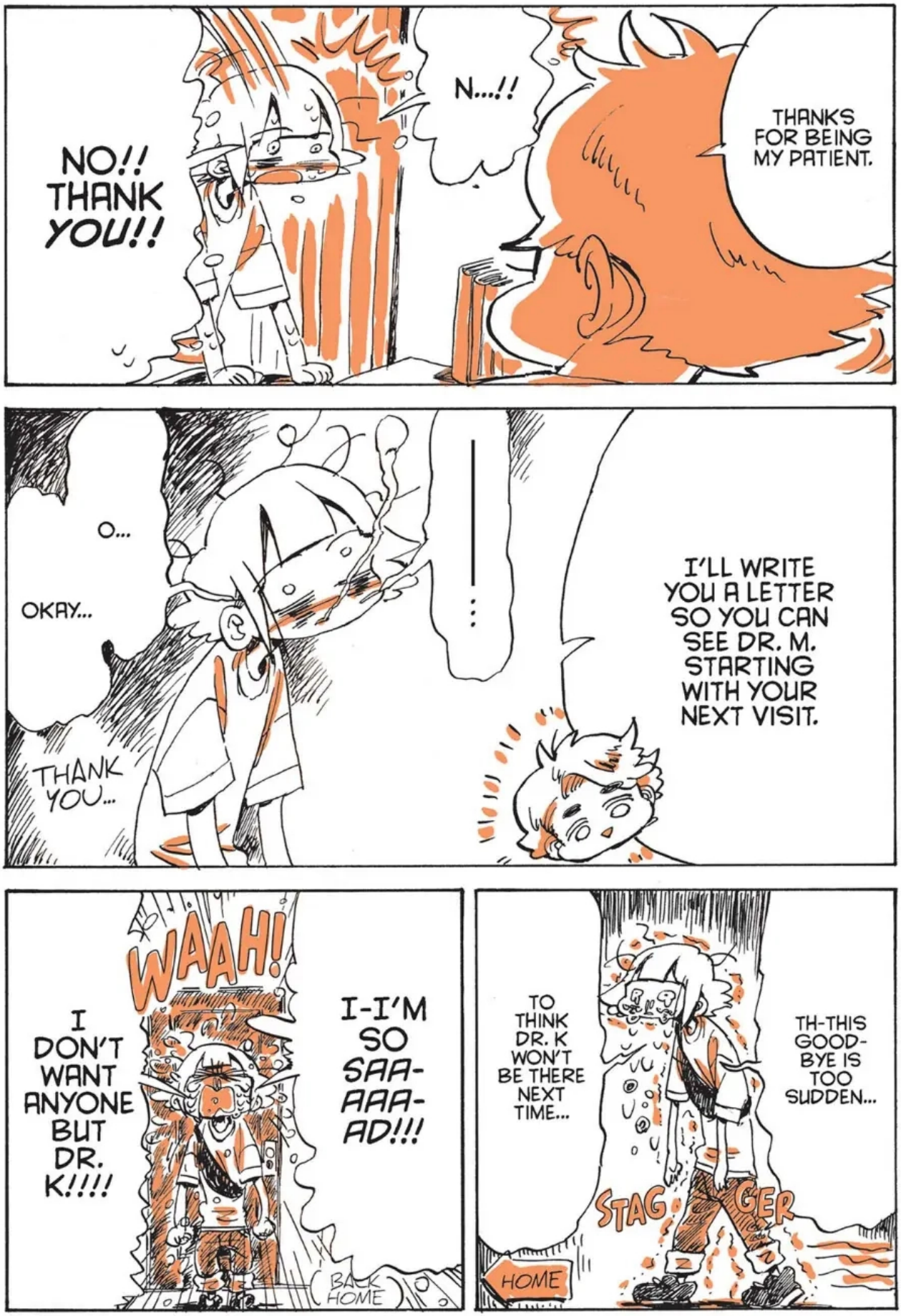
Dr. K had been taking care of me for three and a half years, since my first bout of pancreatitis. So what happened next felt really sudden.

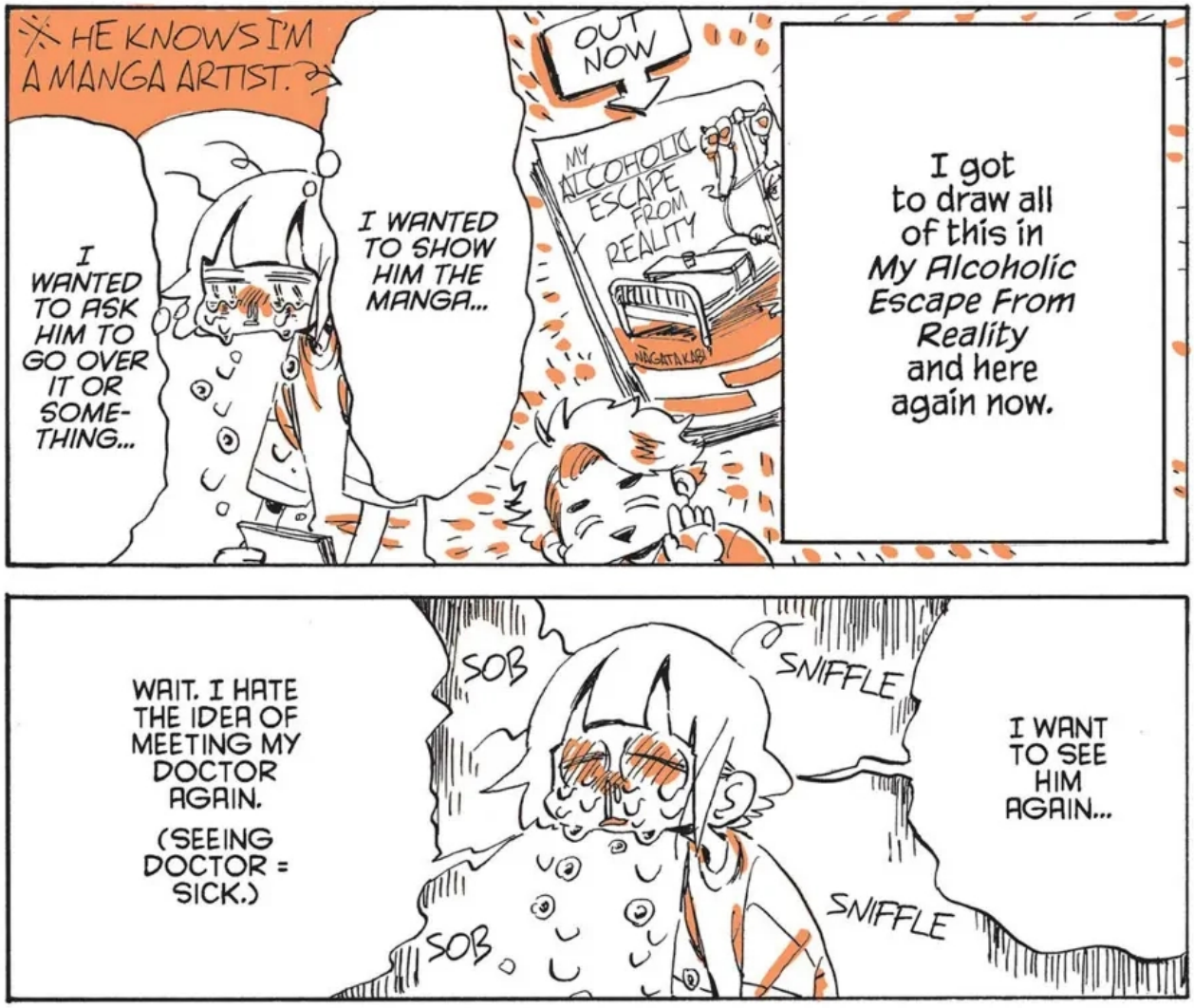


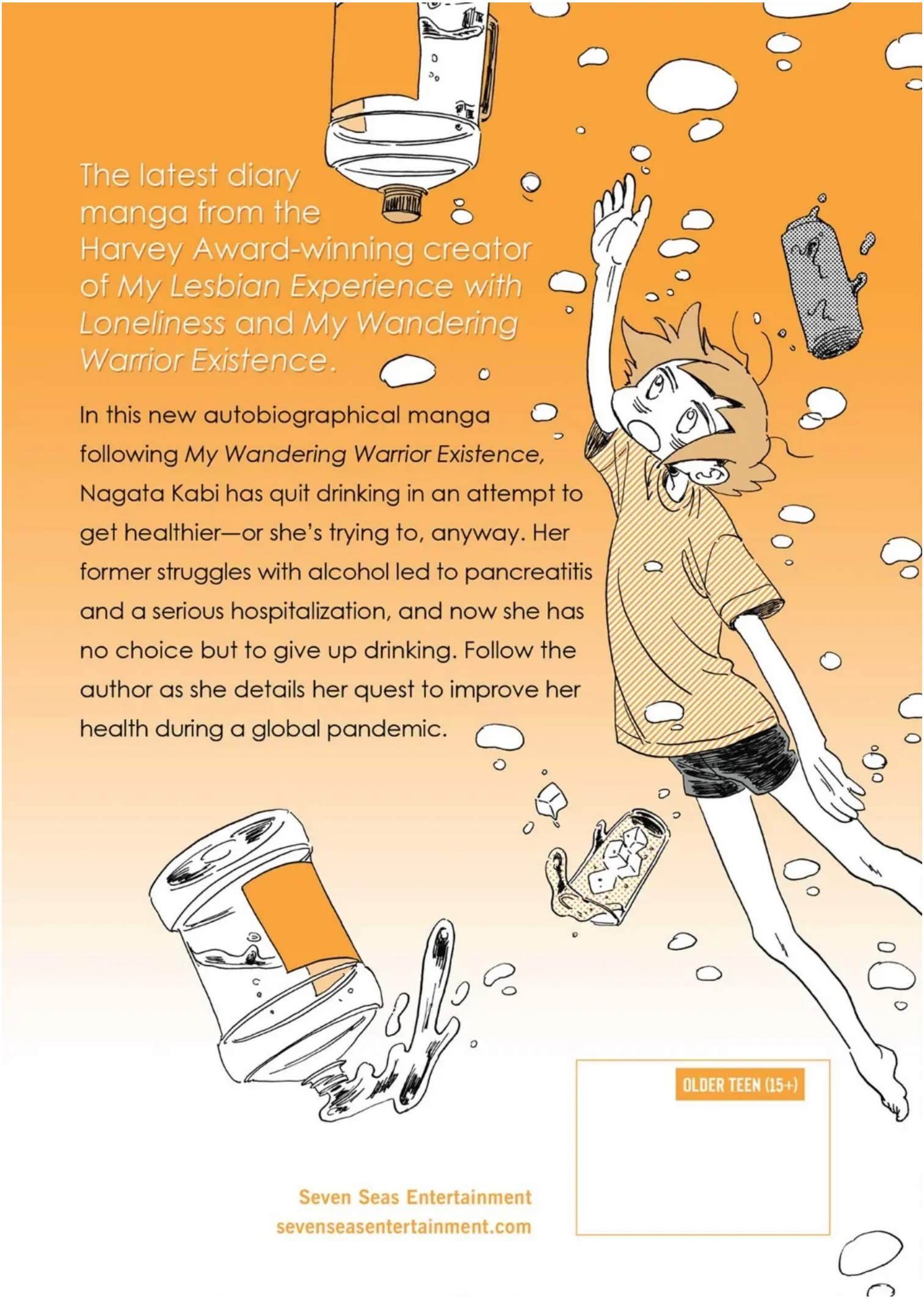
TRANSFERRING TO A NEW HOSPITAL.
I'M...


WHA-AAA-AAAT??!!

...


NO!! THANK YOU!!
N...!!
THANKS FOR BEING MY PATIENT.
O...
OKAY...
THANK YOU...
I'LL WRITE YOU A LETTER SO YOU CAN SEE DR. M. STARTING WITH YOUR NEXT VISIT.
I DON'T WANT ANYONE BUT DR. K!!!!
WAAH!
I-I'M SO SAA-AAA-AD!!!
BACK HOME
TO THINK DR. K WON'T BE THERE NEXT TIME...
TH-THIS GOOD-BYE IS TOO SUDDEN...
STAG GER
HOME


HE KNOWS I'M A MANGA ARTIST.?
I WANTED TO ASK HIM TO GO OVER IT OR SOME-THING...
I WANTED TO SHOW HIM THE MANGA...
OUT NOW
MY ALCOHOLIC ESCAPE FROM REALITY
I got to draw all of this in My Alcoholic Escape From Reality and here again now.
WAIT. I HATE THE IDEA OF MEETING MY DOCTOR AGAIN.
(SEEING DOCTOR = SICK.)
SOB
SNIFFLE
I WANT TO SEE HIM AGAIN...
SNIFFLE
SOB
SO I'M GONNA FIGHT TO STAY SOBER !!!!
IF I DO SEE HIM AGAIN, I WANT HIM TO BE SMILING LIKE THAT!!
YOU CAN DO IT...
WHEN YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO IT!!



The latest diary manga from the Harvey Award-winning creator of *My Lesbian Experience with Loneliness* and *My Wandering Warrior Existence*.

In this new autobiographical manga following *My Wandering Warrior Existence*, Nagata Kabi has quit drinking in an attempt to get healthier—or she's trying to, anyway. Her former struggles with alcohol led to pancreatitis and a serious hospitalization, and now she has no choice but to give up drinking. Follow the author as she details her quest to improve her health during a global pandemic.

OLDER TEEN (15+)

Seven Seas Entertainment
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